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NEW STATESMAN

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The phonetappers' budget

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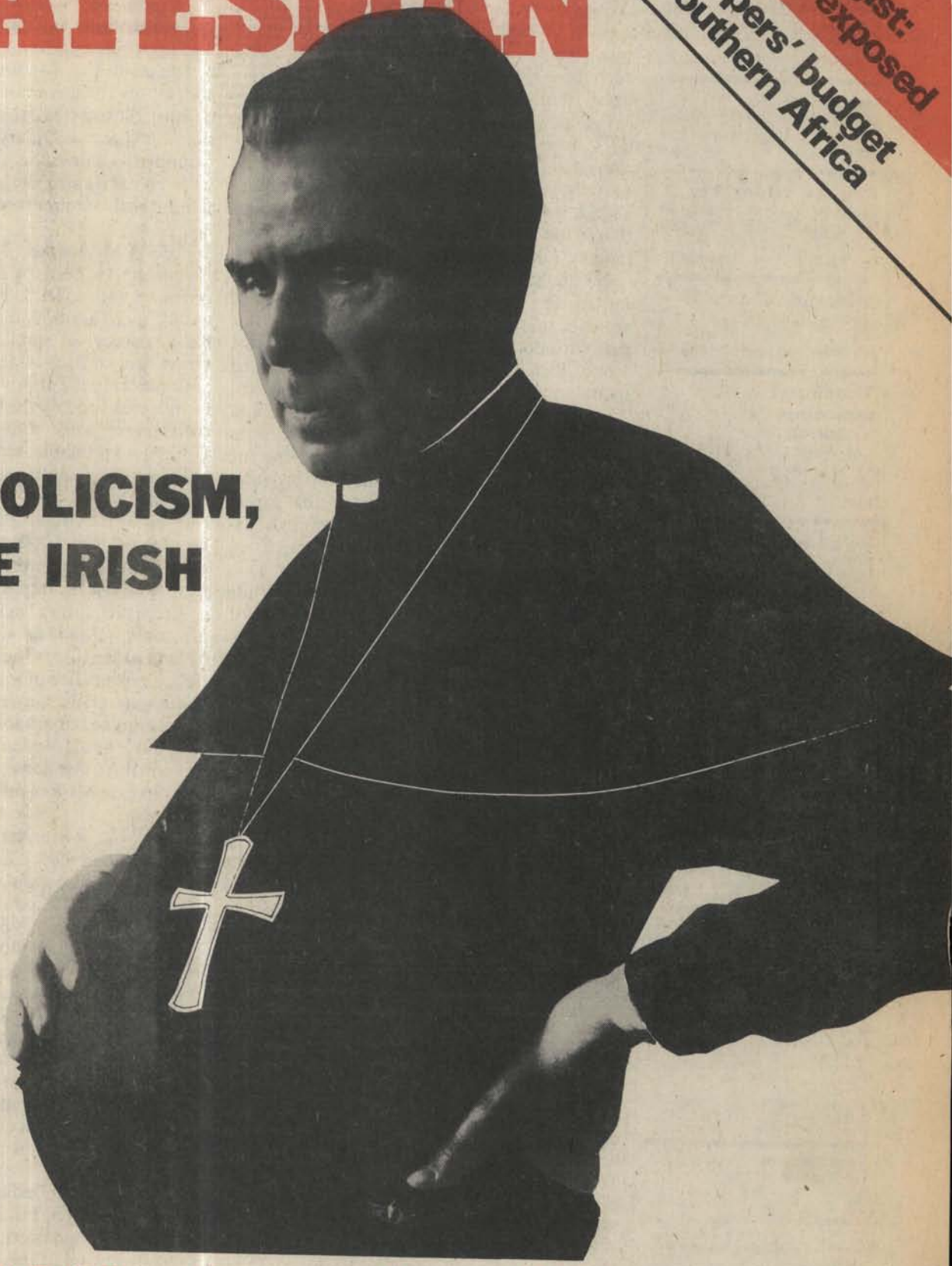

SEX, CATHOLICISM, & THE IRISH

Would the laws be different if bishops got pregnant?

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Instability in Washington

A HARD, but valid test of an open society is that it is one where it remains practicable for a common citizen to shoot the chief executive. In totalitarian societies, by contrast, the leaders are wholly protected from the people — often, because of their knowledge that fleeting exposure would guarantee extinction — and encounter their chief risks of death or overthrow at one another's arbitrary hands.

President Reagan and his entourage are the latest in a considerable succession of politicians and officials who have paid in blood for keeping in being the alternatives to dictatorship. It is a matter for congratulation and relief that in his case it was not the ultimate price, as paid by John Kennedy or Aldo Moro.

No doubt there are too many guns available in America, and no doubt the general level of violence there is higher than it should be. But there are not too many European viewpoints from which a holier-than-thou attitude can be made convincing — and certainly not our own, when we are unable to resolve a savage and dreary civil war. What Western democracies need to do is estimate without moralising the evidence which the murder-attempt provides about the political coherence of the superpower upon which they habitually rely in hairsbreadth issues of life and death.

'AS OF NOW I am in control here at the White House', said Alexander Haig, Secretary of State, just one hour 52 minutes after the President was shot. With news of the President's remarkable recovery, there have been emollient statements from the White House about the consensual welcome with which other officials received Haig's brief assumption of 'command authority'.

Few cool observers have been impressed. Haig's performance was unedifying and unlawful, for whatever the obscurities of the US Constitition, there is no way that the powers of the President can devolve as far as the Secretary of State while the Vice-President and the Speaker of the House remain alive. In immediate terms, Haig has probably damaged no-one but himself through his over-eagerness. But his motivation is worth considering, and this may well have been nostalgia.

During the last derelict days of Richard Nixon's Presidency, Alexander Haig, the White House official, enjoyed 'command authority' of a very sweeping kind: he was closer to becoming the de facto President than anyone since the 1920's, when Mrs Woodrow Wilson assumed command of the US government while her husband's mental disintegration remained a carefully guarded secret.

To the extent that political systems must revolve around individual authority, they are susceptible to individual incapacity, however caused. The point about the existing Presidential system is that it is unusually vulnerable.

Ronald Reagan was elected to his position of control over gigantic forces by fewer than one-in-four of his fellow-Americans. And he is immediately surrounded by a group of men, formidably hungry for power, none of whom have been elected to their positions at all. Even before he was wounded, the President had delegated much of his 'command authority' into their eager and disputatious hands.

The claim that Mr Reagan was still in 'full control' of the government — at a time when he was still too weak to be given the sad news that his press secretary had been critically wounded — shows that the White House team have an easy-going definition of what executive authority amounts to.

WHEN A MAN aged 70 sets out to occupy for four years — perhaps for eight — the most gruelling and powerfully-armed office in the world, there are bound to be questions about his physiological stability. And in practical terms, the control of the President's person, and therefore the ability to define his capacity or incapacity, lies in the hands of people whose own power and authority must be extinguished, in principle, along with his.

Even in the unambiguous extreme case of the President's death — as the Kennedy case showed — the circumstances of human loyalty make it bitter and difficult for the Presidential team to hand over to the Vice-President, the next-available bearer of electoral legitimacy.

These difficulties begin with the fact that the US constitution is an antique — its designers, among other things, never intended the Presidency as an office of great importance. As the Watergate crisis showed, the antique system still has some remarkable and valuable properties, but it needs modernising nonetheless.

Probably, one consequence of the mindless attack upon Mr Reagan will be the drafting of legislation to provide better mechanisms for dealing with a President's incapacity, temporary or otherwise. Such reforms would do more to stabilise the democratic command of the world's most powerful nation than any regulations upon the traffic in firearms. But they have not much more hope of ratification, because the present deadlock and disorder of the American party system make it difficult to believe that workable agreements can be reached on so criticial an issue.

Some comment on this side of the Atlantic appears to suggest that the Americans owe the rest of the world a special duty — to purge themselves of violence and instability, in order to provide the rest of us with reassurance. Of course, America is somewhat more violent than some other industrial societies and yet these deep-rooted instabilities are not likely to be swiftly eradicated except on the highly-unlikely notion of the United States becoming a dictatorship.

The proper posture for the rest of the world, and certainly for Britain, is to cease hand-wringing over gun-laws and come to terms with the reality of America's imperfections. □

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New details on the costs of British Telecom's phone-tapping: Duncan Campbell reports.

British Teletap Inc.

MORE THAN A MILLION pounds a year is spent on paying phone tappers by the British government, according to government and Post Office documents obtained this week by the *New Statesman*. The budget for the year which ended last month is £1,370,000 — and this only pays the wages and National Insurance contributions of the staff whom the Post Office (soon to become British Telecom) have employed to connect and operate the taps.

Our investigations have also unearthed the new cover adopted by the Post Office's special phone tapping division. Last February, when we revealed the thousand-line phone tapping centre in Ebury Bridge Road, London, the division was called the 'Equipment Development Division' of the PO's Operational Programme Department.

It is now called the 'Equipment Development Policy Division' of British Telecom's Exchange Services Department.

Its code number has been changed from 'OP5' to 'ES4', and after the *NS* revelations it was given a new phone number for staff, 01-432 4367. This is a cover number which is connected to a special Post Office exchange in Gresham Street in the City of London. The tappers also have a cover address at the same building. A previous number was revealingly connected to a Chelsea exchange.

Since the *NS* revelations, all references to ES4 have been deleted from the Post Office's Telecommunications HQ staff directory, and PO employees have been ordered to treat the directory as 'classified', and to have copies pulped under security control when out of date.

The budget for the telephone tappers' pay was £1.2m for 1978/9, £1.29m for 1979/80, and £1.37m for 1980/81. The budget has risen at around 7 per cent a year. These figures include purely nominal capital costs, and it may be that an agency other than the Post Office pays for capital expenditure.

The tapping budget for 1981/82 will be just under £1.5 million excluding capital costs. This suggests there are between 110 and 150 Post Office employees whose full-time job is tapping other people's phones.

These staff do not, however, have to *listen* to any calls, which is the most time-consuming part of the work — that is done by MI5, the Special Branch, and other tapping 'consumers'. The productivity of the phone tappers, who merely have to fix up the lines, therefore seems very low if the government figures on the number of phone taps every year are accepted. In 1979, for example, the Home Office claims that only 463 warrants for tapping were issued. That implies that each Post Office phone tapper could only manage to operate, roughly, 3-4 taps in the course of each year.

Since the *NS* revelations, the tappers have stopped using the main door to their premises at the rear of 93 Ebury Bridge Road, SW1. In fact there is a secret security door they can use between their offices and the quite innocent Employment Tribunals Office which is directly in front of their building.

According to other government documents, the Home Office and Foreign Office both make sizable payments to the Post Office for so-called 'Agency's services. This is connected with fixing bugs and taps through the telephone system. Among other costs, the Post Office has a bug manufacturing 'Special Investigations' division near Ipswich, whose budget for 1981 is around £1.3m. □

Rick Rogers reveals the contents of a suppressed report on lead.

Is your school here?

FOUR PRIMARY schools in London are so polluted by lead and other metals that they are causing the Inner London Education Authority 'extreme concern'. But the ILEA and the GLC are refusing to name the schools in case the parents 'panic or go wild'. These schools are among 28 inner London schools recently surveyed for pollution — 25 schools breached the recommended safety level for lead in dust of 500ppm set down by EEC and American environmental protection agencies. The *New Statesman* has obtained the list of the schools involved in the survey and of those causing 'extreme concern'.

Three primary schools recorded a dangerously high mean level of concentration of lead in dust: Telferscot in Balham SW12 (5190ppm); Rushmore in Clapton E5 (4730); and Harbinger in Cahir St E14 (3150). The readings at these schools ranged from 120 up to a staggering 26500ppm. Two of the other lead-risk schools — Phoenix (880) and Beechcroft (500) cater for delicate and maladjusted children.

A fourth primary school — St Bernadette's, Atkins Rd SW12 — recorded an 'exceptionally high' arsenic and chromium pollution level — 50 times higher than the mean level for all playgrounds. There are no statutory levels for arsenic in the general environment, only in works atmospheres. For land reclaimed from industrial dereliction for housing, the following guidelines apply for arsenic in soil: gardens 10 to 20ppm, amenity and open public spaces 40ppm. For American urban roadways the average reading is 11ppm. At St Bernadette's the arsenic level in the playground dust was 400ppm.

Lambeth Council says its own subsequent tests have failed to come up with such a figure. But the GLC, which carried out the survey for ILEA, has confirmed its tests are correct, and that the pollution is intermittent — being washed away by rain and then returning. The cause of this pollution has not yet been found. One possibility is that it comes from a local industrial process.

THE OTHER 21 lead-risk schools in the survey are: Henry Compton, Kingwood Rd SW6 (1990ppm); Pakeman, Hornsey Rd N7 (1840); Bentworth, Bentworth Rd W12 (1800); St Thomas More, Appleton Rd SE9 (1350); Redriff, Rotherhithe St SE16 (1100); Penton, Ritchie St N1 (1010); Dulwich Village infants, Dulwich SE21 (940); Seven Mills, Malabar St E14 (890); St Stephen's, Westbourne Park Rd W2 (890); Latchmere, Burns Rd SW11 (880); Drayton Park N5 (880); Phoenix, Bow Rd E3 (880); Boxgrove, Boxgrove Rd SE2 (860); Paddington Green, Park Place Village W2 (740); St Saviour's, Lewisham High St SE13 (710); Parliament Hill, Highgate Rd NW5 (700); Our Lady's Convent, Amhurst Park N16 (660); Brockley, Beecroft Rd SE4 (520); George Eliot, Marlborough Hill NW8 (510); Beechcroft, Beechcroft Rd SW17 (500).

Many schools have been uncertain whether they were part of the pollution survey or not. Surveyed schools have not been told the results. So far only one school has been earmarked for further testing

Schoolchildren enter the gate at St. Bernadette's.

— and no action has yet been taken to reduce lead pollution at the 25 schools.

A follow-up series of tests is about to begin at Telferscot. But the head believes his school is being retested simply because the school was 'drawn out of a hat' and not because it is the most polluted school in the survey. The secrecy is due to a fear by administrators that 'parents will panic or go wild if they know'. The other two high-risk schools will be retested later.

Causes of lead pollution include leaded paint, nearby industrial works such as metal smelters, and lead piping. But by far the major cause in cities is pollution from car exhausts because of the leaded petrol.

THERE IS now growing evidence of a firm link between poor educational attainment and even quite low levels of lead pollution in children. Young children are especially vulnerable because of the immaturity of their brains and nervous systems, and because they absorb lead easily and fast. (20 of the 24 lead-risk schools are primaries.) One key effect can be reduced IQ. A recent study puts the potental drop at up to five per cent, which can double the number of British children reckoned to be mentally retarded. Other effects include hyperactivity, lack of concentration, and psychologi-

To all our readers

From this week, the *New Statesman* costs 50p, and is printed on lighter, less attractive paper. We don't like doing this, but it makes it possible to achieve our aim of a trading break-even. That aim is necessary becaue the NS — something of a rarity in British journalism — is wholly independent and unsubsidised.

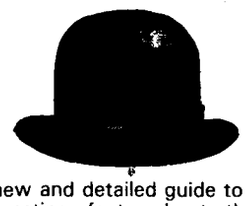
The recession cuts advertising revenue, so that we must recover more of our costs from cover-price. And rising postal charges would cut heavily into subscription revenue, but for the switch to lighter paper.

Our assumption is that quality of information, not quality of newsprint, is what matters most of all in a magazine. So, over the next few months, we shall continue our efforts to throw light into those corners of the world that conventional newspapers can't, or won't illuminate.

NEXT WEEK:
The warheads at the bottom of your garden

Duncan Campbell begins a new series investigating the British Bomb. Under shrouds of official secrecy, the government has built up an extensive and elaborate system of stockpiles which is bigger, and more dangerous — to us, if not the Russians — than anyone has yet learned.

COMING:
Annals of the British Establishment



A new and detailed guide to the interesting facts about themselves — some sordid, some hilarious — that Our Rulers spend so much time and effort expunging from the record.

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cal behaviour and learning problems.

The ILEA playground survey report criticises the present official level for lead in petrol. Even the GLC's new safety or action level for lead in dust of 500ppm (adopted after its original proposal of 5000ppm was rejected by councillors) is regarded as 'not attainable at present in many places in London.'

The ILEA report points out that 'the four schools found to warrant further investigation represent, on a simple pro-rata basis, more than 150 schools in the whole of the ILEA area'. But many other schools are at risk. Earlier this year, St Patrick's primary school in Plumstead SE18 (not in the ILEA survey) was checked for pollution after a child was diagnosed to have lead poisoning. Greenwich council advised that areas be repainted and the playground washed down. This has still to be done. Taking *all* those schools surveyed that breached the safety level, the total number of potentially polluted schools, on a pro-rata basis, is 1050 — some 90 per cent of the capital's schools. That means 300,000 children are at risk in school playgrounds. □

Patrick Wintour on the current anti-activist mood in the SDP

The Party of the postal ballot

AT THE SOCIAL Democratic Party's gigantic media launch last week David Owen promised the public that 'this is your party' and that 'it would be more democratic than other parties'.

However, already dissident social democrats are privately expressing concern at the new party's proposed reliance on postal ballots, referenda and questionnaires to formulate and decide party policy. These dissidents disagree with the prevailing mood at SDP headquarters that in the media age, activists are an unnecessary encumberance. Some of these fears appear to be confirmed by a draft copy of a Social Democratic Party constitution written by David Owen and obtained by the *New Stateman*.

The SDP is currently preparing a constitution but the fourth clause of the constitution which Owen has already written, and 'is designed to reflect the party's commitment to the principle of participatory democracy', states:

> members of the party are to be consulted on the formation of party policy, both nationally and locally, by means of postal questionnaires at least once a year . . . there will be provision for a significant section of the party to ensure a referendum on particular policy issues and for amendments to be proposed by a significant section of the party.

In this draft, no mention is made of policy being discussed at conferences by activists. A party run in this Bonapartist way can quickly become manipulated by the centre which has all the resources, finance and information at its disposal to ensure the membership returns the desired vote.

The interim rules also contain a number of ambiguities.

> Any eligible person who wishes to join the party shall apply for membership in such manner as the steering committee shall from time to time publicly announce or may otherwise permit . . . candidates for public election will *normally* be directly selected by all the party members in the relevant electoral areas . . . members or supporters of any organisation whose purposes are incompatible with those of the party may not join the SDP (my emphasis).

David Owen's constitution, however, is quite specific on how the national steering committee will operate . . . there will be a chairman of the party, and chairmen of the organisation, communication and policy committees, all elected by postal ballot under a single transferable vote system, a chairman of the parliamentary party and five members of the parliamentary party elected by members of the parliamentary party on the basis of STV in a postal ballot; finally, Scotland, Wales and something called the 11 provinces of England would each have two elected representatives (one male and one female), none of whom would be MPs.

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS' attempts to build up an organisation nationally and forge new alliances with other parties of the centre are proceeding with caution. Many of the 'private enterprise' social democrat groups which have emerged since the Wembley conference have received the cold shoulder from the SDP. In particular, the SDP has been wary of the Social Democratic Alliance.

For example, earlier this year but after the Limehouse Declaration Owen asked his man in the west country, Stephen Mennell, to go to a SDA meeting in Bristol at which, among others, a leading local SDA man, Frank Paton, was speaking. The meeting did not go well. Soon after beginning his speech, Paton announced his intention to go through the 34 seats which he thought the Liberals and the social democrats could win in the region. This provoked Mennell into telling him in his own words 'more or less, to shut up', and he wrote to Owen that 'the man is a menace . . . we cannot have him posing as regional chairman of the new party'.

Mennell was more impressed with Stephen Haseler and Roy Morris — two SDA leaders — who seemed to acknowledge that the SDA's days were over. But hopes that the SDA would abandon its independence have proved misplaced: to the annoyance of the SDP it is fighting in the local government elections.

A similar fate has befallen attempts to link the Welsh Liberals with the SDP. In February Alex Carlile, chairman of the Welsh Liberal Party and candidate for the highly marginal seat of Montgomery, wrote to Owen privately saying he would like to stand 'with the words Liberal and Social Democrat after my name'. Writing of the shambles of the Liberals — through lack of funds — and recognising that many would not immediately agree with such a link he nonetheless felt this was the way to stop both groups becoming 'just a small and transient half life in the history of our generation.'

Mr Carlile seems, however, to have jumped the gun: his national party merely approved continuing policy discussions between the Liberal parliamentary party and the social democrats. □

Rob Edwards reports on the increase in gas and electricity disconnections

Get-tough policy

THE ELECTRICITY Boards have breached the code of practice on fuel debts in one out of every five disconnections, according to a report by the Policy Studies Institute which has been suppressed by the fuel industries.

The report — completed last December and described as 'interim' — is part of a long-term review of the code of practice initiated by the government and sponsored by the Electricity Council, the British Gas Corporation and the Electricity and Gas Consumer Councils. In spite of constant requests, the electricity and gas industries have refused to allow it to become public. The final report and recommendations of the review should be ready by the autumn.

The code of practice assures those in arrears with their fuel bills that their supply will not be cut off without an adult present unless a court warrant has been obtained. The report says that this assurance appears to have been broken in one-fifth of all electricity disconnections and in six per cent of gas disconnections. Households have also had their electricity cut off after arrangements have been made to repay the debt and, in a few cases, there is evidence that entry has been forced and supply disconnected when only children were present.

110,000 electricity and 35,000 gas disconnections take place every year in Britain. Although the level has declined since the introduction of the code of practice in 1976, last year saw an increase. The report points out that the London Electricity Board's 'conscious get-tough policy' led to a fifteen-fold increase: the Yorkshire Electricity Board is also singled out as having increased the disconnections in its area and the two Scottish boards are criticised for their 'surprisingly high level' of disconnections.

The gas boards 'appear to consumers to provide better treatment than the electricity industry' and their officials are generally more helpful. □

Peter Kellner on a warning from a Tory ally

No tax cuts

A WARNING that the Government will not be able to cut taxes before the next election has been delivered by one of its few allies in the economics profession. The warning comes from the London Business School team led by Alan Budd. The LBS model of the economy is the most 'monetarist' of the mainstream models, and exceeded in its capacity for predicting monetarist miracles only by Patrick Minford's team at Liverpool University.

The LBS say in a memorandum to the Treasury and Civil Service Committee of MPs: 'The path for the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement in the [Government's] Medium Term Financial Strategy is consistent with the monetary targets up to 1983-84 but our forecasts suggest that taxes cannot be cut in 1982-3 and 1983-4 unless there are further public expenditure cuts.'

With this statement the LBS extinguishes the Government's hopes of generating a 'monetarist' expansion of the economy in such a way as to cut income taxes significantly ahead of the next election. Last spring the Government expressed this hope by incorporating a 'fiscal adjustment' (i.e. tax cuts) of £3½ billion in its forecast for 1983-4. By last month that forecast cut had been halved to £2 billion (both figures are at 1979-80 prices) — just about enough to offset the tax increases announced in last month's budget.

Now LBS is saying even that cannot be done without violating the Government's financial strategy. The LBS thinks the Government is being too optimistic about receipts from indirect taxes (like VAT) about public sector costs, and about nationalised industry finances. When adjustments are made for these things, the government's room for manoeuvre goes.

The LBS, it should be stressed, is not attacking the government's strategy. Its forecasts for medium term unemployment and economic growth are, if anything, more optimistic than the Treasury's. It is precisely because the LBS is deemed an ally that its gloomy prediction on the scope for tax cuts is likely to be so wounding. Only North Sea oil can save the Tories now. □

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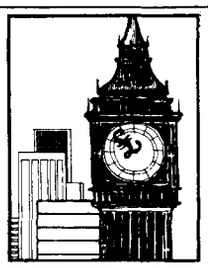

Peter Kellner, Political Editor

Proportional voting: it's not a moral issue

THERE IS A GOOD CASE to be made for proportional representation. There are also good cases to be made for delaying summer time, driving on the right-hand side of the road and supporting Arsenal.

Alternatively, I know some good reasons for first-past-the-post, advancing summer time, driving on the left, and rooting for Spurs.

These issues all have something in common. They can only be resolved by reference to sentiment, self-interest and practical judgment. Yet, to listen to Roy Jenkins, the Social Democrats are rooting for PR, not for the perfectly respectable reason that they stand to gain from it, but out of some deep-seated attachment to the principle of the thing. In a recent speech to the Constitutional Reform banquet he said:

> We are demanding a move to a fairer system which will allow a clearer representation of the popular will, accompanied by greater stability of national direction and policy. In this demand we are on the side of the people against the increasingly fossilised party oligarchies. Nor is that surprising in view of the eminent equity of the case . . . [Proportional representation] is an essential step to the regeneration of Britain.

With such fervour the Social Democrats put PR at the heart of their programme. Sometimes the fervour leads them astray.

For example, Jenkins argues that PR leads to more stable and consistent governments. Well, sometimes PR and stable government do go together (as in West Germany), and sometimes they don't (as in Italy). And Jenkins is wrong to say that the European Communities Act was the only major law enacted by Edward Heath's government to remain on the statute book. What about the 1971 Immigration Act, the 1972 Industry Act, and the legislation to reorganise local government and the National Health Service?

BUT IF JENKINS's command of detail is somewhat wobbly, the 'eminent equity' of PR remains a powerful argument. Or does it?

There are broadly three kinds of PR: the pure system, the multi-member system, and the topping-up system. Israel has the pure system: voters select their favourite party, and the 120 seats in Israel's Knesset (Parliament) are divided in direct proportion to the number of votes cast for each party. *In principle*, this is the only way to ensure that each elector's vote counts equally: other PR systems produce approximate, but not exact, replications of the popular will in Parliament. Any government in Israel must consist of a party or parties that have secured a majority of the votes cast. No other PR system *automatically* secures this.

But then, look what happens. National Party machines decide who goes on the list, rootless parties headed by famous 'names' spring up and then die, and some minority parties — notably religious extremists — exact a horrendous price for helping the larger parties construct majority coalitions. Israel's electorate undoubtedly possesses the purest PR system in the world, but the practical result is dreadful.

In Britain, incidentally, the Israeli (or similar Dutch) system would have given the National Front three seats in Britain's 1979 election. If, as the Social Democrats argue in their mini-manifesto, 'we need a sensible system of proportional representation in which *every* vote really counts' (emphasis added), it is difficult to argue on principle against such NF representation. Any system of PR that deliberately or implicitly discriminates against really small parties, however unsavoury, violates the purity of the PR principle.

The multi-member system, using the single transferable vote (STV), produces a

Barclaycard? That will do nicely.

nearish approximation to pure PR, although tiny parties like the NF would not get any seats. You have, say, six-member constituencies, and the seats in each constituency are distributed in rough proportion to the votes cast for each party. Voters are also able to rank their preferred candidates within each party.

Such a system can work reasonably well in small countries like Ireland. But, as the pro-PR Hansard Society report on electoral reform observed five years ago, 'in no case has STV been used in a country with a population anywhere near that of Britain.' Constituency sizes here would sometimes be enormous, and lacking in local identity, rather like the elections to the European Parliament in June 1979.

Thirdly, there is the topping-up system. West Germany has this. Half the MPs (you can choose a different proportion if you wish) are chosen in individual constituencies on a first-past-the-post system. The rest are chosen from parties contesting the election in such a way that the overall balance in Parliament reflects the *national* distribution of the party vote.

This is the system that Roy Jenkins and the Hansard Society prefer. Jenkins goes on to argue that we, like the Germans, should have a five per cent threshold: parties that do not obtain five per cent of the national vote would be ineligible for any topping-up seats.

ONCE AGAIN, principle and expediency collide. Jenkins's system would be biased against both tiny parties and the geographically localised parties of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. One not entirely fanciful product of a five per cent threshold would be the formation of a celtic nationalist umbrella party constructed solely as a general election alliance for the purpose of climbing the five per cent hurdle. And it would have every incentive to fight a number of *English* seats to make up the national numbers.

If anyone finds our present system absurd and harmful, let them ponder the consequences of such a celtic alliance. For one thing it might by its very existence increase the threat to Britain's national cohesion. For another, a tiny switch in votes could have a huge impact in Parliament. If 30 million people vote, of which 1,499,999 vote for a celtic alliance it might win no seats; but if just one more person supports, it, the alliance will pick up 32 seats. The prospect is of the balance of power being held by celtic nationalists relying, at the margin, on a few thousand decisive votes cast in Liverpool and Kilburn.

All that is a possibility rather than a prediction. The general point is that any electoral system is capable of producing either sensible or silly consequences, with smallish parties having either far too much or far too little influence in Parliament. The choice is not between good and bad systems, but between systems that are imperfect in different ways.

My own preference would be to continue with single-member constituencies, but to introduce the 'alternative vote'. This would ensure that each MP secured the support of at least 50 per cent of his voters. Each MP could then legitimately claim to represent a majority of his constituents — a difficult claim today.

As to the argument that governments should not change so often, there is a simpler answer than PR. It is not one I advocate, as I reckon that one of our basic democratic rights is to have the regular opportunity to turn out governments we don't like. But if you really believe that continuity is the most important task in a restructured political system, then the answer is not PR-Parliaments elected every five years — but first-past-the-post Parliaments elected every ten. And I defy any Social Democrat to prove otherwise.

One final point. Eleven years ago, when Northern Ireland was beginning to erupt into savage violence, Professor Richard Rose produced some convincing evidence that PR might benefit Ulster, by ensuring the Catholics fair representation in Stormont. Such a reform could defuse one of the most potent Catholic grievances against Protestant gerrymandering. Rose put the argument to Shirley Williams, then a home office minister. Mrs Williams turned him down flat. 'What would Jeremy Thorpe make of it?', she responded. How times change. □

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Ireland's bishops decide

MARY HOLLAND reports on the suffering caused by the double standards in Ireland's attitude to sexuality.

EVERY FRIDAY a party of 12 Irish women board the evening flight to Birmingham for the weekend. When they arrive there they are taken by taxi to a hotel. On Saturday morning they check into a nursing home, have an abortion, remain there overnight and return to the hotel for breakfast on Sunday morning before going to the airport for the return journey to Dublin. The travelling arrangements cost £IR92 and the abortion itself £85 sterling.

This type of block booking is repeated twice a week to London. Here the cost of the abortion is £95 but against this the woman spends only one night in the clinic or nursing home before returning to Dublin, so there are no hotel expenses. If she can manage to travel at the weekend she can also take advantage of the new cheap air fare between London and Dublin, to which the only condition attached is that the traveller remain in London over Saturday night.

These are not the only routes, nor the only methods by which young Irish women obtain abortions in Britain. They are simply the ones recommended by the Irish Pregnancy Counselling Centre, which is the only organisation willing to admit openly that it operates an abortion referral system which ensures that Irish women will receive adequate counselling on the choices open to them if they are pregnant. It also means that if they opt for abortion, they will get the necessary psychological and medical help in a country where abortion is still a civil crime and, as important, deemed a mortal sin by the Catholic church to which most of them belong.

Official British statistics show that about 3,000 Irish women went to Britain last year to have abortions. These statistics refer to women giving addresses in the Irish Republic. The real number is likely to be at least double, possibly treble that, since many Irish women either stay with friends in England or, being fearful of subsequent discovery, give false addresses. What these figures mean is that the number of Irish women who have abortions is about the same per thousand of the population as in Britain.

For most of these Irish women, over 60 per cent of whom are under 27, the experience of abortion is likely to be traumatic. I asked one of the counsellors at the Irish Pregnancy Counselling Centre what was the main problem confronting an Irish woman with an unwanted pregnancy and her answer was immediate:

> Guilt. Guilt whether she has the abortion or not. I often feel there are four of us in the room, the girl, myself, her mother and God.

It is sometimes difficult to assess who presents the greater difficulty, the woman's mother or God. Of 300 young women questioned at the Dublin Well Woman Centre last year 30 per cent gave as their reason for having an abortion the fact that they couldn't tell their parents. 'It'll kill my mother' was the phrase most often used. Nonetheless God, as represented by the bishops of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, led by Cardinal O'Fiaich, is also a vocal and extreme factor in influencing their decisions.

IT IS ILLUMINATING, in this context, to detail the furore here over the debate in the EEC parliament in February on the Document on Women's Rights. This document, the result of 14 months' work by the women's group in the parliament, accepted that there was a need for women to have access to safe and legal abortion *as a last resort* in the case of an unwanted pregnancy. It was careful, given Catholic influence in the EEC, to put this squarely in the overall context of demands for safe contraception, maternity benefits, creche facilities and so on. There are 15 deputies for the Irish Republic and three from Northern Ireland in the European Parliament. Thirteen of those from the Republic voted against the Document because of the section on abortion. Two abstained, as did Rev. Ian Paisley. One Unionist Deputy from Northern Ireland, John Taylor, voted to support it. Afterwards he described the scenes in the European Parliament, which had reduced the Dutch author of the Document to tears, as Ireland's day of 'Holy Terror'.

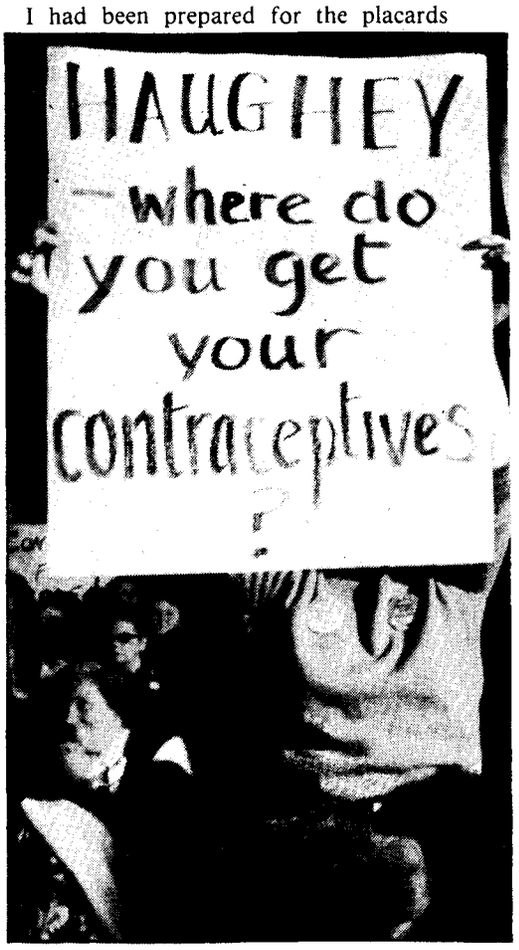
In fact, the holy terror was only starting. In the days that followed the debate Archbishop Dermot Ryan of Dublin warned that Ireland might have to face the prospect of withdrawing from the EEC because of the parliament's endorsement of abortion. One of his fellow bishops, commenting on the debate, recalled the Nuremburg Tribunal which had been set up to remind the world of what could happen when the natural law was made subordinate to the law of the state. At least one of the Irish deputies admitted that representations had been made to him by his local bishop to take a strong line on the abortion issue. Very few of the other Irish Euro MPs needed such prodding. They are well aware of the Hierarchy's often repeated view that elected representatives have a duty to represent the views of those who elect them, 97 per cent of whom are Catholics. And to be fair, most of them are believing Catholics themselves who often share the bishops' view of such issues.

The Irish Hierarchy is rattled about abortion, even though all the major parties here are firmly committed to oppose it and individual politicians are fond of denouncing any discussion of it as 'un-Irish'. The bishops, as usual, are considerably shrewder than the politicians. They know that the number of women going to Britain for abortions is increasing at an annual rate of about 20 per cent, and that their own best efforts with a widely advertised counselling service for pregnant girls have failed to reverse the trend. They know very well that these women are not 'un-Irish'. What alarms them is that within less than five years abortion, at the moment the last taboo, could become a live issue in the way that divorce is now, or abortion is in other Catholic countries, such as Italy, which lack the safety valve of Britain close at hand.

For the moment, Irish Ireland, abortion-free is safe enough. The bishops are supported not only by the political punters but by the medical establishment, which voted unanimously at its last annual conference that any doctor discovered to have performed an abortion should be struck off the register. But they have seen how many doctors have changed their minds on the contraceptives issue and they don't like it.

As in Britain, there is in Ireland a large well-organised and effective anti-abortion lobby, writing to newspapers, putting pressure on politicians, telling the usual horror stories about struggling foetuses in the schools. Here I must declare my own interest. Last month I spoke at the first public meeting of the Irish Women's Right to Choose Campaign. Our packed audience had been guaranteed by a headline in Ireland's largest selling national newspaper reading 'MASSACRE OF THE UNBORN', which described our small and embattled platform as part of a 'liberally financed' international conspiracy to bring abortion to Ireland.

I had been prepared for the placards



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about murder, the women describing their own emotions about motherhood, the warnings that God was in the room with us. What was unexpectedly shocking was the vehement moralising of the men, many of them young enough to be students. In England, in my experience, men are usually rather reticent about abortion, perhaps because they feel that if women have to terminate unwanted pregnancies it is, to some degree, their fault. No such restraint obtains in Ireland. It seems evident that in a country where virility is often measured by the number of children in the family, men feel deeply threatened by the fact that abortion will return to women the ultimate control of their own fertility. Maybe they are right to feel threatened. One pregnancy counsellor told me of a middle-aged countrywoman, mother of six children, who was asked to fill in a survey which contained a question about what she felt when she found out she was pregnant. She had written one word: 'Brutalised.'

AT THE MOMENT, the most obvious solution for any young Irish woman who finds herself unmarried and pregnant is to marry the father of the child as quickly as possible, with the minimum fuss. While more young women are rejecting this option, the statistics show that an increasing number of those who do get married are already pregnant. In a paper entitled 'Recent Demographic changes in the Republic of Ireland', Dr Brendan Walsh of University College Dublin showed that the proportion of marriages in which a birth was recorded in the same calendar year (i.e. in which the bride was probably pregnant) had risen from seven per cent in 1959 to 14 per cent in 1977. Here too

Haughey's address to the UN National Women's forum in Dublin provoked this Irish response to an Irish problem.

Derek Speirs (Report)

Keystone

Cardinal O'Fiaich

the Catholic bishops have recently intervened. From this Easter all couples wishing to get married in Catholic churches in Ireland will have to give three months' notice to their parish priest. The reason given for this diktat is that the bishops are gravely concerned at the increase in marital breakdown, and in particular about situations where premarital pregnancies can lead to families putting intolerable pressures on young couples to get married.

The political implications of this bland ruling are breathtaking, or would be in most countries. Ninety-seven per cent of all marriages in Ireland are celebrated in Catholic churches and are recognised as civil marriages by the state. It is easy to imagine what the reaction would have been, particularly from the Catholic Hierarchy, if the state had decided to introduce legislation interfering to such an extent with the civil liberties of the individual. In the event, the bishops' ruling passed almost without comment, so completely is it accepted that the Church has the right to impose its own rules in areas like marriage and divorce, and that the state does not even need to be consulted about the possible effects of those rules on Irish society.

The Hierarchy's commendable desire to act against the evil of shotgun weddings would have seemed more credible if it had produced any alternatives, either through a more humane attitude to contraception, or by campaigning vigorously for more practical support for unmarried mothers and against the heavy legal stigma which illegitimacy carries in Ireland. It has done neither. Those charitable groups set up to help unmarried mothers all tell the same sad story. One such group, ALLY, recently published a report on young women who had come asking for help. This showed that 46 per cent felt unable to tell their parents that they were pregnant, 53 per cent got no help from the man involved, and 70 per cent received no advice from their doctors beyond confirmation of pregnancy.

What these figures can mean in practice was starkly illustrated by a short news story which appeared in the *Irish Times* recently. It was a court report of a coroner's inquest, in the prosperous Dublin suburb of Dun Laoghaire, on a male infant who died when he fell into a lavatory bowl during labour, his eighteen year old unmarried mother having been too frightened to ask for help during her pregnancy. This story merited no media follow-up, nor comments from politicians who were at the time excoriating the government for the inadequacies of its new contraception bill.

THE NEW ACT, which became law last year, was described by Charles Haughey, who as Minister of Health had had the task of piloting it onto the statute books, as an 'Irish solution to an Irish problem'. For the first time it legalised the sale of contraceptives in Ireland, but only through chemists shops and when prescribed by a doctor to 'bona fide family planners'. In effect this meant they were to be legally available only to married couples or people living in stable relationships. This was necessary because, although there is no civil divorce in Ireland, there are thousands of couples living in established second marriage situations.

The very use of the phrase was a sop to the Church. The Hierarchy had already expressed its concern about the situation prior to the act when the existence of family planning clinics, operating openly in most Irish cities, meant that contraceptives in its view were too freely available to single people. At first it was feared that the act might set the clock back several years by closing down the existing clinics. This hasn't happened but there is always the danger that it could if the Hierarchy becomes more vocal on the issue, or there is a hardening of conservative political attitudes.

For several years before the passing of the new contraception bill the Irish bishops maintained a very low profile, insisting that they had no desire to dictate to the legislators on the matter. Once it was on the statute books and the danger of an open confrontation with public opinion had passed, the episcopal tune changed.

Last December the hierarchy issued a statement reminding doctors and chemists that if the bill was against their conscience they should refuse to implement it. The signs are that the chemists at least have rallied to this call and while Dubliners, particularly the middle class, have not been greatly affected by it, in rural areas the story is different. In many small towns contraceptives are completely unobtainable. On this issue, however, a minority of doctors have proved rather less malleable. A recent appeal circulated in the *Irish Medical Times* for doctors to supply contraceptives to their patients if they are unavailable locally has already drawn over 200 responses, or 20 per cent of general practitioners.

Even so, the influence of the Hierarchy is considerable in matters which most doctors would consider to be confidential between them and their patients. Two stories concerning the Regional Health Boards, which administer medical facilities available to the poor, give the flavour. Recently the Eastern Health Board, which is responsible for the Dublin area, decided that the IUD should not be available as a contraceptive because it 'procured abortions'. In Cork, obstetric consultants at another hospital run by a Regional Health Board decided to start sterilising women, whom they thought should not have any more children, by the safe and easy method of tubal ligation. A spokesman for the Catholic Marriage Advisory Service said that the Church authorites would oppose this as 'clearly immoral' and the idea was dropped. In fact this perfectly legal operation is performed, officially at least, in only one hospital in the Irish Republic although it is safer than hysterectomy. The hospital is under Protestant management.

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All this would be easier for Irish liberal opinion to confront if the Church could be presented (as I may seem to have presented it here) as a wholly reactionary force. Several factors confuse the issue. The first is that on some issues, at home and abroad, the Irish Church is genuinely more progressive than many Irish politicians. The most obvious example of this, though one not immediately relevant to the subject matter of this article, is in its attitudes to the Third World.

Last week a march on the American Embassy to protest against that country's policy on El Salvador took place after a mass in which 34 priests took part. At first sight this has nothing to do with the plight of a young, unmarried pregnant woman seeking an abortion. But, of course, it does. The kind of priests who care about El Salvador are also those to whom young Catholic women who find themselves pregnant will turn first for help. Their concern about the Third World helps to establish their moral authority.

Similarly there are areas of social concern at home where individual bishops have been far in advance of any of the Irish political parties. One of them, Peter Birch, died last month. The kind of social services he established in his diocese of Kilkenny through a combination of professional workers and voluntary help did a great deal to advance the thinking of Irish politicians on a whole range of social issues relating to the handicapped and deprived.

Even in the area of private morality we now have a situation — over divorce — which would be redolent with piquant ironies if it did not also involve suffering for thousands of men and women. The Irish constitution, in deference to Catholic teaching, has an absolute ban on divorce. The Church also forbids divorce but does allow a marriage to be annulled if one or both partners can prove that it was never valid in the first place. Such annulments can be granted for 'psychological non-consummation'.

In Ireland, as elsewhere, applications for church annulments have been steadily increasing, through only a small proportion succeed. If they do succeed those involved may remarry in Catholic churches. The Church itself admits that such marriages are bigamous in the eyes of the state and the priests officiating at them are accessories to a criminal act. More important, there are often serious problems left in the wake of such annulments because the Church's tribunals do not concern themselves with the custody of children nor with such matters as maintenance. It is possible to obtain a civil decree of nullity, but much more difficult than getting a church annulment.

Over the past few months a strong Divorce Action Group has gathered considerable momentum by pointing out these inconsistencies and there is evidence that public opinion on the issue is changing fast. The most recent opinion poll on the subject, concluded last December, showed for the first time a majority of 51 per cent in favour of divorce. Despite this the present government adamantly refuses even to discuss the issue and says that it has no plans to introduce divorce legislation.

Now the bishops, possibly reading the public mood more accurately than the politicians, have asked the government to introduce legislation for civil annulments which would at least resolve the conflicts between civil and ecclesiastical law. The same minister at the Department of Justice who has been so steadfast in refusing to consider any change in the law on divorce has promised that legislation on nullity will be introduced as swiftly as possible.

This minimal advance will be made for one reason: the bishops want it. In recent years the Irish Hierarchy has shown a certain discretion over political issues, so much so that when I was doing a series of articles on Church and State for the *Observer* in 1976 I was told by several Irish politicians that the relationship between the two was no longer an issue which presented any real difficulties. That period, it would seem, is now over. The Hierarchy's position was restated last month by one of its most forthright members, Bishop Jeremiah Newman, in a lecture entitled Church and Government:

> As the Irish bishops have said it is for the legislators to legislate, but the Church does have a role to play, not just in placing before the politician what Catholic teaching is on any mixed issue, but of expecting that he will do his utmost to respect that teaching in practice.

At the moment the Irish bishops appear to be speaking with more overt confidence than they have for a decade. Whether Irish people, and in particular Irish women, will continue to accept the degree of control which the Church exercises over their lives is another matter. A piece of graffiti discovered on the wall of a Dublin housing estate puts the oppostion view succinctly: 'If the Pope were a woman, abortion would be a sacrament.' □

THE LAW

Failings of the Contempt Bill

ANDREW NICOL shows how the press will still be fettered

'MY LITTLE ewe lamb' was Lord Hailsham's description of the Contempt of Court Bill, the one law 'reform' measure which he has been allowed by his cabinet colleagues. It purports to bring up to the standards of the European Human Rights Convention our law of contempt, which has been condemned by the Strasbourg Human Rights court as unnecessarily restrictive of free speech. It also pretends to follow the proposals of the 1974 Phillimore Committee. In reality it does neither.

The event which produced both the Strasbourg decision and the Phillimore enquiry was the series of *Sunday Times* articles on the thalidomide tragedy and the paper's campaign to make Distillers (the UK distributors of the drug) acknowledge their moral responsibility for the victims. According to the House of Lords, because the articles prejudged the litigation between the children and the drug company they were contemptuous. Their likely impact, or lack of it, on any eventual trial did not matter. The bill does reverse this. The test now will be whether there is a 'substantial risk of serious prejudice'.

Yet, a campaign like the *Sunday Times*'s could still, under the proposed law, lead to a paper being fined and its editor sent to prison. This could happen because this part of the bill leaves unaffected contempt in the form of acts which are *intended* to influence legal proceedings. At least some of the judges in the *Sunday Times* case thought that the paper, by waging a public campaign, had applied improper pressure to Distillers to settle their law suit. Phillimore rejected this argument, saying that pressure on parties to litigation was inevitable. Only if there were threats of intimidation or other unlawful conduct should it be contempt. An attempt to amend this proposal into the bill in the House of Lords was beaten off by the Good Shepherd.

A dozen of Phillimore's other liberalising measures have similarly been ommitted or significantly changed. The Committee for instance, wanted the press to be free to comment on appeals: the bill however preserves the *sub judice* rule until the appeal has been decided. But why, it is asked, should judges who are paid munificent salaries for their professional impartiality be cossetted like jurors? Lord Hailsham obscurely referred to the efforts of one paper to interview the wives of three Appeal Court judges. Their husbands had declared that a woman's refusal to have sex more than once a week was no grounds for a divorce. The reporter may have been cheeky, but he hardly influenced the decision.

MORE OMINOUS is the way in which the Bill extends the law of contempt. High Court and Circuit judges have for a long time been able to punish those who disturb their court's proceedings. This has been challenged on the grounds that justice cannot appear to be done if the victim of an attack is also the prosecutor, judge and sentencer. 'Professionalism' is invoked to justify the procedure and now the Bill extends a similar power to magistrates both professional *and* lay. But tempers flare more readily in magistrates' courts where for hundreds of years such interruptions have led to no more than a hiccough in the proceedings while the storm passes or the offender is removed from court. Now offenders can be fined £500 (up from Phillimore's £20 'to take account of inflation') or be sent to prison for one month. This will not help the Home Secretary's recent efforts to reduce the prison population.

The *New Statesman*'s victory of two years ago is reversed. The paper published an interview with one of the Thorpe jurors. It showed that in acquitting the defendants the jury had been influenced by the double-price conviction deal with the *Sunday Telegraph* of chief Prosecution witness Peter Bessell, but that it had been frustrated at not having the chance to convict of a lesser offence than conspiracy to murder. The bill permits general research of juries and disclosures which do not identify defendants, but stories like the Thorpe case will be banned.

The Bill is about to be considered by its Commons Committee. The Second Reading was a curious occasion. With scarcely a non-lawyer in sight it was dominated by the *affaires* Peter Sutcliffe and Harriet Harman. Both are important, but an opportunity was missed to launch a more fundamental attack on contempt. It is the only serious crime which does not carry the right of jury trial. It was largely the invention of the Star Chamber and was revived by judges who were bent on silencing the likes of the 18th century muck-raker, John Wilkes. Swift retribution, it is always said, must be visited on those who sully the streams of justice. But why is the need for speed any greater than when a bank robber is caught red-handed? Wilkes and his colleagues realised the importance of the jury and in Fox's Libel Act won for it the control of criminal libel charges. The present bill represents the first opportunity to do the same for contempt, but Wilkes's successors have been slow with their lobbying. MPs, such as Geoffrey Johnson-Smith, who are normally deluged with representations, commented on the remarkable lack of initiative by the media.

No-one denies that the administration of justice needs some protection, but most lawyers tend to exaggerate the threat posed by the press. As Lord Hutchinson QC said in the Lords, 'the greatest prejudice that a litigant can face is to find a judge, magistrate or lawyer who is incompetent, unfair, simply ignorant or too old'. □

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BRITISH RAIL

The plan to axe 3000 miles

MICK HAMER on the effect of Fowler's cuts

IF THE MINISTER of Transport refuses to increase British Rail's cash limit the Board plans to close over 3,000 miles of railway. The plans are contained in a secret memorandum from BR's vice-chairman Ian Campbell and flatly contradict the public posture BR took last week in its review, *Rail Policy*. BR and the unions are to meet transport minister Norman Fowler shortly to urge him to increase 1981/82's cash limit from last year's £790 million. If they fail the cuts could come remarkably quickly — 600 miles would close in the next two years.

Campbell's approach differs significantly from previous closure proposals. He believes that fixed cash limits and the uncertain future make it imperative to plan for closures rather than responding randomly to pressures on BR's finances. In *Rail Policy* BR argued its case for greater investment in the railways, rejecting the alternative of progressively reducing

> the scale of the railway business to bring it within the capacity of the available assets at acceptable standards of customer service, *but closure of lines on any significant scale is not at present an option which is open to us.* (our emphasis)

But Campbell's paper, which is dated 17 December 1980 and marked 'strictly confidential', shows that just such an option is already being considered. He rejects the optimistic 'things will get better' approach of the BR's corporate plan, which itself was only published earlier this year, saying its assumptions are already outdated. He argues

> it is not possible to await the successful outcome of plans to make more cash available in 2-3 years time . . . Now is the time to determine broadly the policy for the decade.

Campbell outlines three options. First, to let things slide and hope for an improvement. Secondly, to continue on the lines of the corporate plan, and risk a serious cash crisis. And thirdly to cut the railways back to a size BR can afford. It is only this last option which receives any serious consideration.

CAMPBELL ADVOCATES cutting 3,150 miles of railway line, from a total of 22,000 miles — roughly one seventh of the system. Some of the lines — such as the route between Manchester and Sheffield via the Woodhead tunnel — do not carry passenger traffic. Some of the closures would simply involve the singling of existing two track railways — although Campbell says this will only be a 'small part'. Most of the lines will be single track passenger railways. Among the likely candidates are the lines around Lincoln and all railway lines in Wales, with the exception of two main lines to Holyhead and Fishguard.

The programme involves closing 580 miles by 1983 — before the next general election is likely — a further 940 miles by 1986 and 1,630 miles by 1990. The plan does not go beyond 1990, although there is no immediately obvious reason why an accelerating closure programme should suddenly stop there. In Campbell's plans no money would be spent on the doomed lines from 1982 onwards; the trains will have to go more slowly until the track becomes unsafe.

On top of these planned line closures will come a series of forced closures as major tunnels and bridges near collapse. The memorandum mentions eight bridges and tunnels which require major repairs, including the Ribble Head viaduct on the main line between Carlisle and Leeds and the river bridge approaches to Charing Cross and Cannon Street stations. Each of these will cost between £2 million and £10 million to repair, although with 83,000 bridge spans and 296 miles of tunnels on the railways these eight only represent the tip of the iceberg.

The other major investment crunch, according to Campbell, is coming on BR's diesel locomotives and diesel multiple units — the trains that run most of the lines that would be cut. Most of the diesel locomotives will last until 1990, and then roughly 10 per cent of the locomotive fleet will have to be replaced in each of the next ten years. This means buying between 100 and 200 locomotives a year. Campbell comments: 'This is far beyond existing UK capacity and would imply overseas purchase.'

And if track closures don't bring rural services to a halt then a dearth of diesel multiple units will.

> There is no alternative under present policies to the complete withdrawal of the whole fleet by 1995 . . . A steady rate of withdrawal will imply a reduction in the fleet of about 200 cars per year *with a consequent alteration to services.* (our emphasis).

Campbell concludes:

> A conscious move away from a policy of 'even spread of misery' . . . requires certain fundamental decisions about the size of network which can be sustained and the areas of business which meet the most important social requirements and the most profitable commercial opportunities.

HOWEVER, DESPITE Campbell's plea 'time does not allow us to delay decision . . . Nor does it allow us to wait to see whether the additional funds for renewal of life extension will be made available either from within the business or from other sources', BR has decided to make one last attempt to get more money from government. *Rail Policy* says that BR needs an extra £72 million a year to replace its assets. In addition it wants for each year between 1981 and 1990 a further £36 million for electrification, £92,million for spending on commuter services around London, £10 million to improve services to Gatwick and Stansted and £51 million for the Channel Tunnel.

Already the investment squeeze has had a dramatic effect on track renewals. In 1970 BR's civil engineers planned to renew 1034 miles of track — that is 4.3 per cent of the then system. They achieved 99 per cent of their programme. Nine years later they planned to renew 774 miles — 3.5 per cent of the track. They only achieved 78 per cent of their target.

Officially BR wants a decision on its investment plans by the end of this year, and a decision on electrification even sooner, so that a start can be made on renewing the railway in 1983. But the longer the minister leaves the decision the more compelling the arguments for closure become.

In his memorandum Campbell asked the Board

> to initiate the necessary changes in asset renewal policy from 1982 onwards to achieve the results, using cash saved in declining sections of the business for quality improvement in the remaining sections of the business.

Campbell hopes that the cuts will not mean a cut in subsidy. BR themselves want the public service obligation to become a general payment for all passenger services, except the main inter city routes, enabling them to switch funds from current to capital account.

BR does desperately need more investment. And certainly closing the loss-making rural lines can be presented as a sensible commercial decision — with the added attraction that it puts a political armlock on Fowler. But it is remarkably optimistic —and politically naive — to expect passenger subsidies to be unchanged after widespread rail cuts. Even the Department of Transport could be expected to notice that there were fewer trains around.

Where the cuts will fall (miles)

Year	L.Midland	Eastern	Western	Southern	Scot.	Total
81/83	200	200	150	–	30	580
84/86	200	300	250	70	120	940
87/90	500	500	400	80	150	1630
Total	900	1000	800	150	300	3150

POLICY AND POLITICS

EDITOR: MICHAEL HILL

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AMERICA AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Ronald Reagan's Boer War

CLAUDIA WRIGHT on the White House's moves to strengthen South Africa's whites and destabilise black Africa.

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AMERICAN BIG BUSINESS INTERESTS
JOHN MINNION

IN 1969, AFTER the Nixon administration had taken over in Washington, a National Security Council study memorandum, prepared for Henry Kissinger and the National Security Council, concluded that the colonial regimes of Southern Africa —Portugal in Angola and Mozambique, Ian Smith in Rhodesia, and South Africa —would survive their internal insurgencies. In the struggle between white and black, it was argued, there was no 'realistic or supportable' alternative for the Americans except to side with the whites.

Twelve years later, the Reagan administration refuses to accept that policy was a dismal failure, defeated at the conference table and on the battlefield by black guerrillas the Americans badly underestimated.

But the new administration is torn between two impulses. One urges the build-up of American power on African territory to reverse the political and military failures of the past, topple the Angola and Mozambique regimes, annihilate the SWAPO movement in Namibia, and destroy the African National Congress and other movements for the liberation of South Africa. The second impulse would avoid open US moves toward these objectives, but it differs from the first only in the willingness to let South Africa pull the trigger.

Presiding over the bureaucratic manoeuvring from which an Africa policy will come, soon after the South African elections in late April, is Ronald Reagan, whose determination to rewrite the history of Southern Africa is matched only by his ignorance of what that history was*, and the megalomaniacal General Haig, whose racial attitudes put him in the same clubroom with the South African military.

A member of the National Security Council staff in the Nixon period, observing the 'pall of racism' in the staff at the time, reported meetings when 'to the amusement of Kissinger and his colleagues, Colonel Haig would quietly pretend to beat drums on the table as African affairs were brought up.' (Roger Morris, *Uncertain Greatness,* Harper & Row, 1977, p131.)

Assisting Reagan and Haig to make up their minds is a band of conmen, racketeers and spooks whose bank accounts have long been padded by the South African government, and whose personal fortunes will be multiplied many times over when Reagan's decisions are put into effect (see box). By the time Pieter Botha, the South African prime minister, visits Washington (rumour suggests a date in May or June), the administration will have settled on a scheme for institutionalised murder, economic intrigue and personal aggrandizement that Cecil Rhodes and the goldbugs would have been hard put to match.

REPUBLICANS in the Congress and administration officials exude a fervour for their Southern African cause that conceals their intentions about as well as the Jameson Raid was kept secret from the Boers. From the disclosures it is possible to put together this outline of Reagan's plans.

South African military forces will have the American go-ahead to continue, and if they choose, to escalate their attacks in Namibia, Angola, and Mozambique. The Americans intend also to provide a variety of direct assistance to the South African armed forces in return for a share in their military intelligence on the movements of Soviet submarines and surface vessels in the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean, and improved access to South African naval and communications facilities.

The unprecedented visit to Washington in mid-March of Lt Gen P. W. van der Westhuizen, the chief of South African military intelligence, and Cmdr Willem du Plessis, the chief of naval intelligence, caused some embarrassment for those members of the administration who prefer to work in the dark, and who were caught lying to the press about meetings with White House and administration officials they claimed had not occurred. What the visit reveals is that a decision had already been taken to restore the military intelligence links between the US and South Africa that the Carter administration had cut off.

Following the South African attack on African National Congress houses in Maputo, Mozambique, on 30 January, the government of Samora Machel alleged that US intelligence had been provided to the South Africans to pinpoint the targets for their attack. This is not proven. Nonetheless, it can be expected that a wide range of American satellite photographs, communications intercepts, and other data, useful for South African counter-insurgency operations, will now be swapped.

Walvis Bay, the South African naval base on the South Atlantic coast of Namibia, is described by Reagan officials as 'unquestionably South African territory', and they are as loath as Pretoria to give it up, whatever settlement is eventually reached on self-government for the rest of Namibia. Washington has told both the South Africans and Dirk Mudge, the leader of the democratic Turnhalle Alliance in Namibia, who was in Washington immediately after the intelligence officers, that they should stall on negotiations for as long as will be necessary to build the DTA into a credible election force against SWAPO.

Reagan officials would also like to eliminate the embargo on arms sales to South Africa, but hesitate to say so publicly. Instead, the President will issue several unobtrusive executive orders opening loop holes in the embargo regulations to permit the sale of light aircraft, vehicles and other equipment the South Africans want for counter-insurgency work. The permit-licencing section of the Commerce Department will be given new orders to allow exports prohibited by the Carter regime to pass through.

There is also strong support in the administration for removing the obstacles to South Africa's nuclear weapons programme, and one congressional source sees the sale of enriched uranium and other nuclear technology to South Africa as 'in the realm of possibility'. During the Carter administration, evidence of South African (and Israeli) nuclear testing plans produced severe indigestion in Washington, and after Pretoria was dissuaded from holding their bomb test in the Kalahari desert, there was a flurry of conflicting official accounts when the device was detonated in the South Atlantic on 22 September 1979.

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The Reagan administration is confident that the frontline states that support South Africa's guerrilla movements will crumble under direct South African attack and indirect American economic pressure. The economic part of the strategy is intended to demonstrate, in the words of Richard Burt, the State Department's Director of Politico-Military Affairs, that 'it pays to be an American friend'.

African friends, such as Sudan, Zaire, and Somalia, are to be rewarded with development assistance and food aid that is higher than Carter administration levels — the quid pro quo in each case is military facilities and diplomatic support. Gabon, Rwanda, Cameroun and Botswana will also get increased military assistance. States that are inimical to the Reagan plans and support the South African liberation forces are to be punished. According to aid figures released two weeks ago food aid to Angola is to be cut and, in an abrupt action announced on 20 March, the small $15 million provision of food for Mozambique was eliminated altogether. Reagan officials say this is in retaliation for Soviet naval portcalls at Maputo in late February, and the expulsion on 5 March of several US embassy officials as 'CIA agents'. Chad, the starvation-wracked Saharan country which General Haig hopes to turn into a battleground against the Libyans, has also lost its small food grant.

American trade with South Africa, meanwhile, is booming. Last year US exports totalled $2.5 billion, up by 74 per cent from 1979. South African gold krugerrands are flooding the American market, with Americans owning about half of all the krugerrands sold by South Africa — more than $2.5 billion worth. American investment in South Africa — just over $2 billion by the end of 1979 —is growing steadily, while investors continue to withdraw from Nigeria, Liberia, Zambia and Zaire. The American stake in South Africa is now roughly half the US investment in all of Africa.

To feed these interests, President Reagan is planning the removal of restrictions on trade with South Africa, relaxation of tax treatment for American investors in South Africa, and subtle inducements for investors in the border industries in the Transkei, Venda, Bophuthatswana, and Ciskei, the former homelands and ersatz statelets whose dependence on Pretoria the South Africans would like to make less costly. With quiet help from the Reagan administration, 'unofficial visits' to the US can be expected by black leaders from these areas. Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the political and tribal chieftain of Zululand, has retained an American lobbyist, and a trip to Washington by him will help legitimise South Africa's homelands policy, while also permitting the White House to advertise its support for American investments in mineral ventures the chief's tribe can look forward to digging, if not profiting from.

BUT WITHOUT doubt the greatest boon the Reagan administration is proposing for free enterprise is a programme of government purchases for the strategic stockpile that will open the treasury to a multi-million dollar racket in which the South Africans and their US pals will make a killing.

The National Defence Stockpile is ostensibly intended to protect American industry against supply interruptions in wartime. Just how large such stocks should be is controversial. The oil reserve is intended for six months, and the target for other minerals has been changed several times in recent years. At present stocks are supposed to last for three years. There is also considerable debate in Washington about how vulnerable the existing inventories would leave the country in a cut-off. Haig testified last year before the pro-South Africa House Subcommittee on mines and mining that 'the era of the resource war has arrived'.

Stockpile purchases have traditionally been an unnoticed card up the sleeve of Presidents to pay off their industrial backers by supporting metal prices in slumps and boosting them at election time. What Reagan announced on 13 March was a $100 million initial purchase for the platinum group of metals —titanium, tantulum and vanadium, mined in South Africa — and cobalt, produced in Zaire.

US Bureau of Mines figures do not bear out Reagan's claim of dangerously low levels of stocks. What has been happening is a blatant reduction by the South Africans (and the Russians) in the output of platinum to drive world prices higher. The White House move will push them higher still, and give a nice filip to stock prices for Engelhard Minerals and other US mining corporations.

The cobalt deal is an even plainer attempt by the White House to stabilise the price of the metal, which has been declining since the panic buying in 1978, in the wake of the

Contd on p.13

Who gets South African gold?

The South Africans have not left much to chance in converting Reagan's election to their own profit. For years the South Africa Foundation, and American lawyers and public relations firms on contract to Pretoria have been plying notable Republicans with free trips and sizeable honoraria. John Connally, the Texas lawyer whom Reagan eliminated early in the Republican race, has investment interests in a company which mines gold and other metals in South Africa, and is a staunch advocate of South Africa's value to the US (see *NS*, 4 January 1980). William Simon, Treasury Secretary under Ford, turned down a Reagan cabinet appointment — he is on the list of recipients from one South African paymaster. Anne Armstrong, another Republican who turned down a Reagan cabinet offer, was the beneficiary of South Africa Foundation assistance on a trip a year ago.

Among the men who are now officials of the Reagan administration, Richard Allen and Frederick Wettering are well placed to help. In Allen's background, there is a well-paid relationship with the Portuguese colonial regime which gave Allen's consulting firm $60,000 in 1973-74 to assist in covering up in the American press reported massacres of civilians during the insurgency in Mozambique. Wettering works for Allen on the National Security Council staff, speaks Swahili, and is in charge of African affairs. He has been an undercover CIA agent since 1965, and, according to the *Covert Action Bulletin*, has served in CIA posts in Rhodesia, Zanzibar, Kenya and Mozambique, where he was station chief from 1975 to 1977. Another recipient of South African largesse is Scott Thompson, an academic and friend of Geoffrey Kemp (in charge of the Middle East on Allen's staff), who is reportedly to get a senior post at the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

In 1980 the South African Embassy paid a firm of Washington lawyers $300,000 to lobby the Carter Administration, and buy goodwill with political donations to Democratic candidates in the Senate and House. (Eschel Rhoodie, the Pretoria Information Ministry official convicted of embezzlement, claimed that he had contributed to major American political figures for years.) Although a spokesman for the law firm Smathers, Symington and Herlong refused to respond to questions, it appears the embassy is replacing it with a firm better placed to influence the Reagan White House. According to contract documents I have obtained, the South Africans have hired John Sears to represent them this year at a fee of $500,000. Sears was Reagan's campaign manager until forced out in February 1980 by Edwin Meese.

According to his contract, Sears is 'to lobby, represent, advise, and assist in the promotion of the political, economic, and cultural objectives of the government (of South Africa) in the United States of America.' The South Africans are so cocky at the moment that even Chester Crocker, the nominee for the senior Africa post at the State Department, is considered too faint-hearted for the job, and his confirmation is being held up by Senator Helms, Pretoria's agent on the Foreign Relations Committee. Crocker has so far done his best to parrot Pretoria's line to win the job. Two years ago, he told a Congressional hearing that 'to me . . . the security of the Cape route is by far the most important Western interest in the Africa region.'

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John McVicar on the Marathon

Through the wall & inside three hours

LAST SUNDAY'S inaugural London Marathon was won by American Dick Beardsley and Norwegian Inge Simonsen in 2 hours 11 minutes 48 seconds, which is roughly three minutes outside the world record. Beardsley said they agreed on the final mile of their neck-and-neck race to come in together because both felt almost intuitively that this would be a fitting tribute to England's first 'people's marathon'. Holding hands in the run-up to the line was doubtless a precautionary measure done just as instinctively against one of them doubling on their agreement.

When they were hatching their plot to duck the suffering needed to decide who was the better man — after all the world record wasn't on — I was in Millwall, roughly seven miles and about 1,000 runners back, mentally gearing up to hit the legendary wall. About all my pain-blurred mind could take in around this time was a fiftyish spectator in tweeds —who definitely wasn't either born or resident in Millwall's grimy dockland — gleefully announcing the winning time to my section of 'also rans'. I got over him by thinking of the wall he's got to go through over his Banker's Order to the Social Democrats.

With this exception, though, I found the crowd of roughly a million exactly as the first woman home did. Joyce Smith, who with 2.29.56 broke her own British and Commonwealth record (making herself at 43 years the third fastest woman of all time) said of the crowd: 'They lifted me to the end'. Running through the tunnel of applause which the crowd built out of its solidarity with the runners continually stirred my emotions and willed me on. These were people who had come not to gape at the agony but to vicariously share it and, in doing so, lighten the runners' load.

MY DAY, however, hadn't begun with much of a sense of occasion. At 2 am I'd been downing Remy Martin in the West End's Comedy Strip in an earnest attempt both to distract myself from my impending ordeal and to provide myself with an alibi for failing it. My problem, though, wasn't merely a lack of moral fibre. Four months of rigorous training had conditioned a nightly surge of energy which — once I stopped training three days before the race — found its natural outlet in dissipation. There is nothing like hard exercise to produce the sort of wax you need for burning the candle at both ends.

Predictably, after a few hours sleep, I was faced with a drive across London that if I was to make Greenwich Park in time for the off, could only succeed by paying as much heed to the threat of losing my licence as a getaway driver on a bank robbery. I arrived in time for my 8am meet with a *New Statesman* photographer for my 'before' snap. After a fruitless ten-minute wait I registered the bar code attached to my bib number with the Olivetti computer which had been brought in by the race organisers to ensure a quick results service and to prevent cheating. About all I had time for then was to queue for the bog, put vaseline on all my moving parts and join the section of runners with ambitions to run the course in three hours.

THE HALF-A-MILE stream of the 7,500 or so runners — roughly 280 females — with its 'elite runners' at the head, and old age pensioners at the tail, listened to the Tannoy as course designer John Disley humorously took them through the countdown to the 9 am start. Suddenly all the organisational worries of making it to the start on time and in a fit state to run fell away from me and I felt the charge of excitement which was being generated by this enormous field of runners. Immersing myself in the teeming mass of nervously-joking runners connected me to the same sort of spirit which I picked up from the crowd.

Apart from the elite runners at the head of the field everyone was held virtually to a jog by the bottlenecks produced by so many runners funnelling into the streets of Greenwich. My 3 hour schedule meant that I needed to run at just under 7 minutes a mile. I passed the first mile poster in 7.17 by which time the field had strung out sufficiently to allow one to run at whatever pace one chose. With this governor on my pace removed I, like many others, let the spirit of the event take me far faster than planned through the second mile — 6.20.

The rule in running is that the more erratic the pace the greater the toll on one's resources. Despite trying to heed the warnings of my wrist stopwatch, I found that the lift of the crowd's applause and the way passing runners towed one along locked me into a pace which I knew from my training I couldn't sustain. I went blithely through Greenwich, Lewisham and Southwark to the half-way stage at Tower Bridge on a 2 hour 50 minute time.

Indeed, I felt so good at this stage I started edging even the 6.30-a-mile pace which such a time entails. Euphoria at coming so far so easy and the barrage of cheering and clapping set up by the massive banks of spectators at Tower Bridge suddenly made 2 hrs. 45 mins. possible.

IN THE absense of any strain, my mind occupied itself permutating times and I carried myself through the occasional bad patch with thoughts of my friends and family waiting near the finish. As I went into the 7 mile eastwards loop round Millwall I found I was overtaking far more runners than overtook me and I got quite arrogant as I noticed the first casualties.

I could still acknowledge the occasional surprised shouts of 'Come on the *New Statesman*' which subscribers called as they read the sign on my vest. And I was also able to banter with other runners about traffic jams and so on. Indeed, during this section of the course, I replied to one of the marshals who announced that a watering station was coming up: 'Water! What I need is a line of coke.' An American runner who heard this reassured me: 'Don't worry — at 20 miles, they are handing out joints of top quality grass.'

However, it all changed about the 20 mile mark. Suddenly pains from everywhere began crowding into my mind. All the old injuries began playing up: calf muscles cramped, Achilles tendons pulled, knees loosened, the left hip joint grated. A leadenness climbed inexorably up my legs and into my mind, sapping my will and making me incapable of responding to the stopwatch's log of a precipitous drop in pace to 7.30 a mile. The drizzle which once had cooled, now chilled.

After 21 miles, I never had enough to look at the stopwatch — everything had to be committed to just keeping me going. The last six miles loomed up far more dauntingly than did the whole distance back at Greenwich. Psychologically, having run 21 miles meant nothing against having to run another five. All I could hang on to was finishing; my time no longer mattered.

SOMEHOW, I came along the embankment willing myself along a few yards at a time, trying to keep my mind off how long there was to go. Coming up to Parliament, I saw Big Ben registering 11.50 and the knowledge that I only had a mile to go and could still make 3 hours penetrated the pain. I picked up the pace round Parliament Square and along Birdcage Walk. The nearness of the finish and the quite incredible roar of the crowd pulled me along.

I could even think as I passed the palace of the royal family 'not being at home' — doubtless they were annoyed at all that cheering outside their home not being for them, and perhaps they were also irritated at the way the unemployment figures are being used to distract people from the coming wedding.

I finished on 2 hours 57 minutes 45 seconds and as I staggered through the metal barrier passages to receive my medal I knew there was nothing left. I was shaking uncontrollably and the sight of my family coming towards me made me sob like a child for a moment. I couldn't decide anything — not even to sit down.

Somehow I got home without thinking about why I'd done it — only that I never will again. Now all I can offer as an explanation as to the why is what Dostoevsky observed once. He noted that we all tend to assume our well-being is all people care about, yet 'isn't it possible that as well as loving his own welfare, man is fond of suffering, even passionately fond of it.' Whatever . . . the London Marathon is here to stay and it will trigger a running boom such as to quicken the pulse of every sports' outfitters in the country. □

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Reagan & S. Africa

Contd from p.11

Shaba rebellion in Zaire. By purchasing Zaire's cobalt now, Reagan will guarantee the value of the cobalt-based collateral that General Mobutu has put up to keep the New York banks from foreclosing on their loans.

The political cover story that has been dusted off to justify all the Reagan moves alternates between the threat of Soviet intervention to cut off Africa's minerals from their American and European consumers, and the threat of home-grown insurgents who might try for the same end. For many Reagan officials, the latter are merely 'surrogates' for the former, and the war of national liberation against South Africa a scheme dreamed up by the Kremlin.

The odd thing about the Americans' scheming is that even if their phantasmagorical imagination were accurate, the Reagan strategy *improves*, not diminishes the chances of their adversaries' success. The cut-off of aid and the promise of arms support to UNITA (congressional moves are under way to repeal the restriction on covert aid enacted five years ago) doom the tentative moves which Mozambique and Angola have made to develop closer relations with the West. Mozambique has little alternative now but to join Comecon, as the Soviets wish, and the Cubans can hardly be expected to withdraw from Angola if external attacks and bombing continue to escalate.

Reagan has yet to realise how sloping are the shoulders on which he proposes to load his heavy armament. If the Russians and Cubans really rise to the challenge, it would not be difficult to unleash the Ethiopian army in Somalia and create all sorts of difficulties in northern Kenya as well. The south-west of the Sudan is an insecure spot at which to start a fight against Colonel Qaddafi, and a rekindled CIA war inside Angola is bound to restart the rebellion against General Mobutu. The stockpile purchasing racket is also tailor-made for the economic machiavellis of Moscow, who control as much strategic metal as the South Africans, and are just as adept at manipulating world supplies for their own advantage. The last time the Americans used the strategic mineral cover story — to break Rhodesian sanctions in order to import chrome — the Russians managed a colossal windfall.

The one apparent anomaly in the Reagan plan is Zimbabwe. The Republicans still bite their tongue on Robert Mugabe, but for the time being they are content to pledge $75 million in development aid starting on 1 October 1981. To do less at this stage, they have been persuaded, would lead Mugabe straight to the Kremlin door. But this is a decision that can be reversed easily and if — as occurred in the American relationship with Nicaragua —Mugabe doesn't behave himself, the White House will cancel the aid and target Zimbabwe for the same destabilisation which it intends for all its other African enemies. As far as Reagan is concerned, Mugabe can be tolerated so long as he doesn't offend South Africa.

* In a recent television interview, Reagan asked rhetorically: 'Can we abandon a country that has stood beside us in every war we've ever fought?' He is apparently unaware that the Afrikaners who now rule South Africa would have stood with Hitler if they hadn't spent the world war in jail.

Diary

ANNA COOTE

■Spring came briefly to South London. The sky arched blue over Battersea power station; the blackbirds piped lasciviously; the daffodils bloomed in the park and the luscious smell of freshly-mown football fields mingled with the sickly fumes from the local glucose factory. It was an optimistic moment, and I found myself reflecting that urban planners can, and do, learn from their mistakes. For instance, even here in Wandsworth they have come around to the view that they cannot stash any more workers away in 20-storey filing cabinets. When it rains (as it did for most of the rest of the week), these monstrous buildings become all sodden and streaked, and their concrete walls are like dirty saucepans which have boiled over with some foul brew.

But if I drive westwards through the borough I can see the new council estates under construction. Their warm yellow bricks mount no more than three storeys high; their roofs slant cosily. There are little gardens in front and behind, with low brick walls and newly-planted hedges and trees. Between the gardens there are flagstoned paths, where children can play without fear of being knocked down by cars, or by those killer-gusts which hunt the small and the frail in the gulleys between tower blocks. Yes, the planners learn. But at the far edge of the East Hill estate, where the first of the new homes have been completed, a large banner hangs from the upstairs windows, announcing: 'SQUAT AGAINST SALES'.

These 440 new flats are destined not for the neediest of the 7,000 families on Wandsworth's housing list, but for anyone who can raise about £28,000. Anticipating trouble finding buyers, the Tory councillors have set aside £140,000 for estate agents' fees. And there has been talk of spending almost £½ million of ratepayers' money (after this year's 26.8 per cent increase) on individual central heating for each of the East Hill flats. The communal heating system, already built and functioning, is inappropriate for private ownership, you see.

■I have been following with interest the case of Hillingdon Borough Council against the Commission for Racial Equality. Hillingdon, you may remember, bundled a newly-arrived Kenyan-Asian family into a taxi and sent them to the Foreign Office, claiming it had no obligation to house them because Mrs Janmuhammad, her husband and four children had made themselves 'intentionally homeless'. Just three days earlier the same council had decided that another group of new arrivals from Africa, white Rhodesian Peter Turvey and his seven children, were *not* to blame for their homelessness. The CRE wants to investigate the discrepancy, and Hillingdon wants to block the investigation.

In court last week, the learned counsel for Hillingdon painted a pitiful picture of the *un*intentionally homeless Turveys, explaining, among other things, that they had found it most unpleasant living in Rhodesia's increasingly multiracial society. Mr Justice Woolf reserved his judgement. If he rules against the CRE, I can offer this crumb of consolation to the Janmuhammad family. When Hillingdon declared the Turvey family unintentionally homeless, it passed them on to the GLC, who found them a new home — in Brixton.

■Which oil-rich nation held a dinner at the Savoy last Wednesday, at which more than 400 guests enjoyed *La Mousseline de Crevette Nantua* with Enkircher Weinkammer Halbtrocker (1977) followed by *Le Suprême de Pintade Lucullus* with Chateau de Camensac (1970)? I'll give you a clue. The guest list included the chairmen of British Petroleum, Standard Chartered Bank and Pearl Assurance, Foreign Minister Nicholas Ridley, David Steel and Denis Healey. The guest of honour was the country's own Minister of Justice.

Still not there? Here's another clue. All the guests were male, but at one end of the room a small group of women were found to be dining separately behind a screen. Got it? No, it was not Saudi Arabia. It was Canada. The dinner was held by the Canada Club (founded 1810) and the main speaker, Joseph-Jacques Jean Chretien, hoped to persuade the top people of Britain to return the constitution to Canada, with amendments as required by Prime Minister Trudeau.

When I telephoned the club to ask for an explanation, a spokesman by the name of Trevor Spurgeon told me I was talking 'absolute cod'. It was a men's dining club, ▶

Roger Woddis

Yes, again

'The ballot is stronger than the bullet.' — Abraham Lincoln.

Abe believed in ballots,
From which all freedoms flow,
Though people who enjoy them
May not enjoy the show.

Guns to all who crave them
And free from all control
Induce a sense of safety
In every humble soul.

Say, a young man's fancy
Turns to thoughts in spring
Of Garfield and McKinley,
The Kennedys and King.

Guns assist the homeless,
The sick and poorly-shod;
Guns are good for business
And serve the living God.

Finer than the statues
That stand in hallowed halls,
Guns across the counter
Proclaim a nation's balls.

Guns exalt the righteous,
Guns exhibit crime,
Guns that only injure
Will kill another time.

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and that was that. The women behind the screen were not guests, they were 'just the secretaries'. Usually the dinners were private, he said, but this time, owing to the gravity of the constitutional question, the press had been invited. Now, the *New Statesman*'s invitation had been addressed to Christopher Hitchens, as 'Foreign Editor', and was taken up by Kai Bird, our man from *The Nation* in New York, with whom Christopher has swapped jobs for a short spell. But we often pass these invitations between us and some of them land on my desk. I asked Mr Spurgeon what would have happened if I had taken up the invitation: would I have had to join the women behind the screen? 'Nothing so invidious', he assured me; I would have been asked to leave.

■The Conference season is under way and this last paragraph comes to you from the annual delegates' meeting of the NUJ. Entombed in the university campus outside Norwich with some 450 journalists, I feel totally cut off from the news about the world. ('They could shoot the President of the United States and none of us would know.')

Not that we have our heads entirely in the sand. On Day One we plunged straight into an intense debate which tackled the role of the Catholic church, the rights of women, and the relationship between Britain and Ireland. Some Irish members are threatening to leave the NUJ if we don't change our policy on abortion (which commits us to campaigning for a woman's right to choose). Delegates from the Irish branches lined up at one rostrum to beg for a relaxation of the policy: abortion, they claimed, is a 'question of conscience' which should not be allowed to tear the union apart. At the other rostrum female delegates line up to plead that we cannot let our Irish sisters down. (The arguments are in Mary Holland's article, p6.) Passions run high. The women carry the vote, incensing many of the Irish delegates who must return to their branches and continue their drive for new members, in a society where abortion is a crime and a mortal sin. Should a union seek to reflect the dominant view, or to press for reforms and emancipation? We shall hear more of this.

This England

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcard, please.)

☐The manager, Martin Morgan, prides himself on running a strict house. National Front literature, for instance, that he says he saw being sold from the steps of the police station on Monday night, is not allowed inside. And customers wearing Hitler Youth armbands are requested to remove them while standing at the bar. — *Sunday Times* (G.M. Chambers)

☐Mr George Fenn, the Chief Constable of Cheshire, is considering if disciplinary action should be taken against 22 officers for violence on the soccer field when two police teams met in the Chief Constable's Cup. — *Daily Telegraph* (G. Moor)

☐Mr Phil Turner, 54, former Everton footballer of Foordblas, Rhyl, North Wales, who received 10 replies when he advertised for work as a scarecrow, is no longer unemployed. — *Daily Telegraph* (James Scott)

Apply here

Arthur Marshall

THE ADMIRABLE BBC TV nine part series, 'The Life and Times of David Lloyd George', a real BBC 2 treat if ever there was one and with super performances all round, has reminded some of us of a splendid titbit of information about the Welsh Wizard. It came from Sir Edward Spears and his 1939 book, *Prelude to Victory* and was to the effect that Lloyd George much fancied himself as a phrenologist and was inclined, during the first world war, to judge generals by their bumps. General Nivelle's cranium was all that could be wished for. Field Marshal Haig's was not. Concerning the size and situation of the very best class of cranial bump we are not informed or, indeed, how they could conveniently be viewed or, with a polite 'Excuse me', prodded or probed. Haig possessed at that time an abundant chevelure, a real bump-concealing thatch, and he was in addition by nature somewhat chilling and would not have reacted very coöperatively to a muttered 'Do let me feel your bumps', the request carrying with it the most unfortunate kind of suggestiveness and being deserving ('I knocked the feller out') of a straight left to the chin. Perhaps, as Haig sat at his desk, the Prime Minister just tip-toed gingerly round him, noting protuberances and tut-tutting in dismay.

I have had in my time to interview a number of people, for this or that purpose, and to attempt to sum them up in that stressful ten minutes of mutual contemplation, trying to remember that they may not like the look of you either or your impertinent questions ('Why did you leave Doggit and Snodgrass?'). A rough and ready rule for interviewers is 'Choose the one who looks nervous', for the timorous often turn out to be the nicest and best. Had I but known about phrenology, my task might have been much easier, especially in the case of totally bald applicants. However, as my days of interviewing are long since over, I now have no need of a brochure called 'Phrenology for beginners — your bumps and you.'

A fictional interviewer once figured prominently in the dear old School Certificate, a scholastic examination hurdle that will be all too familiar to a number of middle-aged and older readers who will recall that in this severe test of ability, a broad spread of subjects was required and all of them had to be passed or you failed the Certificate (dreaded maths floored dozens). One of the requirements was 'a language' and in many cases the one chosen was French. The examination was in five sections. There were some terribly depressing sentences for translation ('Whatever you do and whichever course you choose, I shall never believe you'). There was a fairly simple bit of English prose to turn into accurate frog. There was an Unseen, to test vocabulary. There was a brief oral examination, which some might consider the most important part but which carried with it (*'Je m'appelle Marshall et j'ai quinze ans'*) deplorably few marks. But the *pièce de résistance* (see how the phrases come tumbling back!) of the whole affair was something rather interestingly called Reproduction and at which many might have shone but which turned out to have no biological connection.

Reproduction here consisted of a very short French story of an anecdotal character usually ending up with a surprise or a mini-joke. This was twice read out by the master concerned and then had to be reproduced in, more or less, their own words by the alarmed candidates, who were given a thin synopsis to keep them on the right track. Thus, if the anecdote were King Alfred and the Cakes, the synopsis might be *'Roi seul en voyage — chaumière — vieille paysanne — gâteaux — le roi s'endort — pourquoi la paysanne est-elle si furieuse?'*. Kings appeared frequently in these tales, usually quite alone and incognito and in the middle of a wood. *'Mais je suis le roi'* was normally the pay-off line, astounding one and all, but the interviewer story of which I spoke was on different lines.

Here a bank manager, with his deputy, was interviewing prospective bank clerks and, on choosing one of them, was taken to task by the deputy. 'Why on earth did you choose that one? He had no letters of recommendation!' 'Ah,' swiftly replied the manager, 'how wrong can you get (*que vous avez tort!*). He had many (*Il en avait beaucoup*)'. There then followed a long list of praiseworthy matters which the deputy had, of course, overlooked. The applicant had neatly brushed hair. His shoes were brightly polished. He was respectful and went to church every Sunday. His clothes were clean and, most telling of all, he had picked up a pin which the wily old manager had left on purpose (*exprès*) on the floor. 'These', summed up the manager, 'are worth all the letters of recommendation in the world', thus unerringly choosing what sounds like a really appalling little prig.

When, as a schoolmaster in the 1930s, it fell to me to read out, to the two School Certificate forms which I took in French, this improving little story, it seemed to me to be legitimate to make use of graphic gestures. After all, one of the very few things that the frogs can at least do properly is to wave their arms about. Very well then. And so I helped my reading along with anything vivid that I could manage, for example a daintily joined thumb and first finger and a stoop when it came to the moment to pick up the pin (*ramasser l'épingle*). The neatly brushed hair warranted a sort of smarm with the arm. The devout Sunday church-going expression was rather beyond me but I attempted a saintly look, to a giggle or two. But I see now that all this might be considered to be a borderline kind of cheating, and therefore any of my ex-pupils who still treasure that hardly won School Certificate in the 1930s may care, conscience-stricken, to return the commemorative scroll to the Board of Education. Oundle schoolboys were, and indeed still are, rightly noted for their probity and so the Board may expect quite a hefty shower of what used to be known as bumpf. □

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LETTERS

Family policy

From David Oldman, Dept of Sociology, University of Aberdeen
The need for a socialist family policy is just as acute as Anna Coote says (*NS* 20 March) and she is right to stress that the Tories are working away at one of their own, based on putting married women back into the home to ease the unemployment statistics. But, like most of the Tories' plans, it isn't working and the situation for women is even worse than Anna Coote thinks. Married women are losing their jobs, but so are married men, and there is no evidence to suggest that women are losing their jobs faster than men. If anything, the reverse is the case, and the corresponding burden for women is the greater.

As Peter Kellner points out (*NS* 27 March), married women often can't or won't register as unemployed, so the employment statistics are what we have to go on. The message is clear. Since the war, right up to the present, there has been a slow but steady rise in the percentage of the workforce that are women. This has continued noticeably even through 1980. Although we don't know how many are married women and how many are in part-time work, the fact remains that inexorably paid labour is increasingly being done by women, because, of course, in spite of legislation they still come cheaper and, when employed part-time, can be hired and fired at will. The manner of production is continually changing so as to be able to use this type of labour.

Women, then, are exploited by having to do *both* paid and unpaid labour, and present policies are making it harder for them to do so. The unsupported mother struggling to find and keep a job with less and less state aid for child care is becoming the archetype of the modern family rather than merely a 'social problem'.

From Suzie Fleming, Bristol Wages for Housework Committee
It is refreshing to see a serious discussion of family policy being given such prominence in your magazine.

While documenting the effect of social service cuts in increasing housework, Anna Coote's *policy proposals* in effect hide the volume of housework going on in individual homes — because she takes no account of it. Yet recent articles in the press as well as official surveys have estimated the housework involved in running a home with two school-aged children as over 100 hours a week.

Providing more facilities like canteens, nurseries etc is important in relieving that burden. But we may prefer to eat at home (sometimes or often); we may prefer to look after our own children (sometimes or often); we may prefer the flexibility of making our own arrangements with friends or neighbours. So we also need the cash payment for the work that would leave the choices in our hands. And that includes the choice of whether to do the work at home ourselves (paid), or use the money to pay someone else to do it while we go out to a job.

The detailed report prepared by the Norwich Labour Party constituency, which recommends a homemakers allowance to be paid for the work and not the number of dependents (i.e. on top of Child Benefits), and to be paid whether or not you go out to a job, is a crucial step in the 'work on the details' which Anna Coote calls for.
79 Richmond Road, Montpelier, Bristol

From R. Dumbleton, National Housing Liaison Committee
Anna Coote's very important article 'Fixing up the family' (*NS* 20 March) did not mention this government's housing policies which are already 'fixing up' many families and will do for very many more.

Homelessness, prolonged living with parents, higher rents and mortgage payments, damp, disrepair, obsolescence, the new slums, the desert estates — all are pressures on 'households', with or without children, which are getting worse and will reach an extraordinary intensity with the scale of the housing cuts.
35 Deri Road, Cardiff

Legal, decent, honest . . .

From Barry Flynn
Peter Sissons and Paul McKee were two of the people I came to respect most when I worked under them at ITN. Sad, then, that they are unable to perceive the underlying paradox of their reply (*NS* 20 March) to the Glasgow University Media Group. They conclude (rightly, I think) that their criticism of ITN's coverage of the Labour Party was unfairly selective, and invite 'any open and fair minded observer' to judge them 'on *all* the facts, not a selection from them'.

Would that television audiences were accorded this indulgence, let alone media sociologists. For, of course, the most notable feature of TV news bulletins lies in their selectivity. Messrs Sissons and McKee would no doubt reply that, at least, the selection is made (to use their own paradigm) by 'open and fair minded observers' — but it is precisely this assertion that critics of the media are worried about.

It is, after all, a common-place of philosophical and sociological enquiry that no such 'observers' exist, and I am sure that the Glasgow researchers themselves would laugh at the suggestion that any academic research *could* be value-free. Why do television journalists continue to insist that they, alone among us lesser mortals, produce a picture of the world that *is*?
31 Richmond Road, Leeds 6

From John Tyldesley
On 25 March ITN News opened with a headline, announcing in incontrovertible tone some slanders of the late Mr Tom Driberg, with a description of his left-wing associations. Although delivered in a manner with implied certainty, it was only at the end that the whole thing was seen to have been in quotation marks, and merely a conjecture of a Mr Chapman Pincer — a vital qualification, apparently added as an afterthought, but which should have been at the beginning.

Subsequently the story was ridiculed by close observers, as highly improbable, and at 10.00 p.m. although the story was repeated, ITN had removed it from the headlines entirely. The bias, in this case, lay not in the main text, but in the manner of presentation.

Television news from both channels disappoints by taking as its model those sections of the press which regularly use that kind of presentation. It has so far missed the opportunity to venture its own distinctive style of journalism, popular in expression, but aiming at a superior quality, and, above all, disinterested.
86 Linacre Rd, Litherland, Lancs.

Boilers . . .

From Crutes, Newcastle, solicitors to the Boilermakers' Society
We refer to two articles by Mr Rohrer on 6 and 13 March.

The allegations against the Executive Council (the 'bureaucracy' as your reporter characterises eight Trade Union officials who have all been working boilermakers) and the General Council (consisting of eight members who are currently working at the trade and three officials) are that they 'arbitrarily' excluded votes of one candidate as against the other, that they failed to carry out proper enquiries into alleged ballot-rigging, that they presided knowingly or complaisantly over an election which was 'shot through with ballot-rigging, fraud (and) irregularity' and that the Executive Council permitted one of the candidates (Mr Murray) to be present at Executive meetings dealing with disputed election results.

We understand that your reporter contacted Mr Murray for the first and only time late in the evening of 3 March and he has dealt with this in a letter which you printed in your edition of the 20 March. Apart from this last minute telephone call to Mr Murray, no other member of the Executive Council and, so far as we are aware, no member of the General Council has ever been approached by Mr Rohrer about any of these allegations, which are strenuously denied.

We do not comment upon the detailed allegations about the election because as your reporter did not mention — either deliberately or through inexcusable ignorance — this election has been the subject of High Court proceedings since 23 September 1980. Mr Williams then commenced Court action against the Society and Mr Murray and these proceedings have been vigorously defended. His allegations will be examined and tested by the Court which he has chosen to go before. That is the forum where this dispute is to be examined — not in the pages of your magazine. Your reporter's failure to mention anywhere in the articles the fact that proceedings are actually in existence demonstrates, in our view, a 'classic' (to borrow his phrase) contempt of Court both in the legal and ordinary meaning of that phrase.

Inaccurate and slanted? For the reasons which we have already given, we are not commenting on the details of this election. However let us just mention two other facts: first it is *not* correct that in June 1975 'the High Court ordered a new election': the truth is that the two candidates (Mr Williams and Mr McFall) agreed that they would have a new ballot rather than pursue legal proceedings. Second, it is correct that Mr Williams 'has journeyed twice to the High Court' in proceedings against the Society. It is also correct that the Executive Council are currently being sued by two members of the Society in the Liverpool area for allegedly failing to take action on complaints of a disciplinary nature against Mr Williams and another person. The Executive Council is defending this action and last year successfully resisted an application for an injunction. This case originates from Liverpool (where we believe your reporter is based) and is referred to in the Affidavits in the present proceedings.

Faced with these articles what does the Society do? Does it institute contempt of Court proceedings against you as Editor? Does it report your magazine to the Press Council? Does it sue it for libel? Or does it just sit back and let these articles wash over it, unanswered?

Contempt of Court action would, we fear, enable you to pose as guardians of free speech whereas in truth you are devaluing free speech and the Courts by the contents of and omissions from these articles.

We understand that you have recently been reprimanded by the Press Council. We would like to think such reprimands have some effect but you may view them as badges of journalistic virility.

Libel action? You may say that not many members of the Boilermakers Society read your magazine. That may be true but nevertheless the effect of these defamatory allegations on the reputations of the members of the Executive and General Councils (and other officers mentioned) as men elected to do an honest and fair job is such that on their behalf we reserve their rights to sue, at the appropriate time.

Let the articles go unanswered? This is a natural temptation on the footing that any answer — particularly if it comes from Solicitors — can be made to appear a stuffy interference with the rights of a free press. Is there not an equal right of public figures not to be traduced by the press?

Ed note: We are of course pleased to print this letter from the legal advisers to the Boilermakers Society, while standing by our original story. We considered the question of contempt of court but took the view that changes in the law, now passing through Parliament, helped to create a situation in which reporting on events of the sort taking place inside the Boilermakers Union is legal.

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Apologist for Hitler; apologist for Soviet repression. **Kai Bird** investigates the case of David Irving.

The secret policemen's historian

DAVID IRVING, a self-described 'mild fascist', is a marvellous example of that new breed of right-wing propagandist-cum-historian. Robert Moss and Arnaud de Borchgrave, authors of the recent bestseller, *The Spike,* at least had the decency to call their thinly disguised tale of left-wing subversion in Washington a piece of fiction. Irving would have done well to follow their lead in his latest book, *Uprising: One Nation's Nightmare: Hungary 1956.*

Irving's previous works, nine books on the World War II period, firmly established his reputation as 'revisionist' historian of Nazi Germany. His best-known publication, *Hitler's War,* is notorious for arguing that Hitler knew nothing of the Jewish holocaust. In *The War Path: Hitler's Germany 1933-39,* Irving describes the Fuhrer as 'a dictator by consent' who 'created a Germany of equal opportunity for manual and intellectual workers, for rich and poor'.

The persecution and extermination of the Jews was due to the 'clumsy and mindless brutality of Hitler's underlings' such as Goebbels who diverted Hitler from 'statesmanlike and responsible policies'.

Despite such drivel, respectable historians such as A. J. P. Taylor have praised Irving as a 'patient researcher of unrivalled industry and success'. Irving is obviously envied by his 'colleagues' for his ability to win the confidence of retired Nazi officials who have provided him with the diaries and other Hitler memorabilia necessary for his 'revisionist' scoops. But it is also a fact that many of Irving's books have been the targets of successful libel suits.

In 1970 Irving was successfully sued for a phenomenal £40,000 by Captain Jack Broome, one of the subjects in Irving's book, *The Destruction of Convoy PQ17.* In his judgment, Lord Justice Phillmore, not noted for the severity of his libel judgements, called Irving 'a grasping, conceited and foolish young man', and questioned how his publisher (Cassells) 'could have sunk to the depths that they have . . . Presumably they thought the profits from the sales would outweigh the damages on the libel action'.

Ironically, Irving eventually did collect some royalties on the book when, after he agreed to delete some anti-Soviet material, the Russians printed some 50,000 copies.

Irving barely escaped being the target of another libel suit concerning *Accident: The Death of General Sikorski,* in which he suggested that Winston Churchill may have ordered British intelligence to organise the assassination of the popular Polish nationalist leader in a plane crash. Drawing on a key piece of evidence from Irving's book — an entry in the appointments diary of the Governor of Gibraltar — the German playwright Herr Rolf Hochhuth popularised Irving's theme that Sikorski had died at British hands in a play called *Soldiers.* Hochhuth's publisher, Andre Deutsch, was promptly sued by the sole survivor of the plane crash, pilot Edward Prchal. Irving had to concede that he had mis-read the key diary entry; Prchal won an out-of-court settlement and Andre Deutsch was forced to withdraw the *Soldiers* from publication.

In 1979 Irving charged in the introduction to a German edition of *Hitler's War* that *The Diary of Anne Frank* was a forgery. His publisher, Ullstein, was subsequently forced to pay compensation to Otto Frank, who holds the rights to *Diary.*

It is also worth noting that the managing director of Ullstein, Wolf Jobst Diedler, took the extraordinary decision to excise from *Hitler's War* Irving's contention that Hitler had not ordered the extermination of the Jews. Diedler wrote to Irving on 7 May 1974:

> No house for which I am responsible will publish material that I cannot justify politically or historically . . . I do not think my cuts have . . . harmed your book, but . . . should you . . . be of a different opinion, then we must part . . .

His British publisher would have done well to have had similar standards. Irving's 'scholarship' is consistently shoddy, to say the least. A *Sunday Times* (10 July 1977) investigation conducted by Gitta Sereny and Lewis Chester revealed among other things that Irving had doctored his translation of a key Hitler document, leaving the impression that Hitler had issued a comprehensive 'veto' of the liquidation of all Jews. In another instance, Irving is shown to have selectively quoted from a Ribbentrop document, censoring material that didn't fit with his thesis of Hitler's innocence. Some of his key sources, when contacted by Sereny and Chester, called Irving's interpretation of their statements 'absurd', 'quite improbable', and 'ludicrous'.

Irving's very first book, *The Destruction of Dresden* contained similar 'errors'. In one instance he managed to tack on an extra 'zero' to his tally of casualty figures — thus conveniently inflating his indictment of the Allied fire-bombing of Dresden.

Given this track record, it is a wonder that Irving has anything left from his 'scholarly' reputation. In Germany he seems thoroughly discredited; in 1978 he suffered the acute embarrassment of having his work picked apart in the harshest terms by a panel of eminent German historians on national television. He was heard to say afterwards, 'This has cost me thousands of sympathisers in Germany.'

PERHAPS it is for this reason that Irving has now refocused his propagandistic talents on a subject far afield from his first love. The result, however, is once again a harmful and ultimately dishonest book that smears the memory of thousands of Hungarians who lost their lives in an attempt to overthrow a Stalinist dictatorship.

An hour by hour account of the 13 days in late October and early November 1956 when the Hungarian people fought to free their country of an occupying Soviet army can't help but be a dramatic story. And, no doubt, *Uprising* will win a few accolades, for like Irving's other books, it too contains previously undisclosed documents, exclusive interviews, and a mountain of historical trivia. Irving is, after all, the first Western historian chosen by the Budapest regime to be given access to material on the 1956 revolution.

Irving's message, however, invoked throughout his narrative, is an incredible one: that October 1956 wasn't a revolution

Richard Willson

David Irving's wisdom

- 'The Notting Hill race riots were caused by coloured wideboys with knives.' (Imperial College rally for Oswald Mosley, 1959)
- 'I belong to no political party but you can call me a mild fascist if you like . . . I . . . visited Hitler's eyrie at Berchtesgarden. I regard it as a shrine.' — *Daily Mail,* 1959
- 'The whole of post-war history has shown that right-wing groups do not resort to terrorism.' — *Ipswich Evening Star,* 1980
- 'The Establishment will never destroy me. I am indestructible.' — *Sunday Times,* 1970
- 'Truth is what all Marxists fear the most.' — *Uprising,* 1981
- 'The proletariat cannot be educated completely; therefore it should not be educated at all.' — Imperial College student newspaper editorial written by Irving
- 'My aim at present is to become rich.' — *Daily Mail,* 1978

Uprising: One Nation's Nightmare: Hungary 1956 by DAVID IRVING *Hodder £13.50*

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All photos: John Kadovy

These young men had changed into the uniforms of regular police, hoping to disguise their actual status as members of the notorious ÁVH (secret police). They were summarily executed soon after the battle for Republic Square. Irving uses this well known dramatic sequence of photos to illustrate his claim that the '56 revolution was actually a *'pogrom'* and that this *'mob'* violence compelled Krushchev to intervene.

at all, but a mob 'uprising', sparked by anti-semitism, which quickly disintegrated into the indiscriminate violence of a 'pogrom'.

It is not hard to see the roots of this outlandish theory; Jews weigh heavily on Irving's mind. In *Uprising* the author makes a point of assidiously identifying who is and who is not a Jew — and even on several occasions who is a 'former Jew'.

A good portion of the book is devoted to Irving's chronicle of the rise and fall of what he calls Hungarian dictator Matthias Rákosi's 'original Jewish camarilla'. Rákosi himself is described as the 'ugly Jewish dwarf that he was . . .'

Nameless secret police officials, engaged in inserting a thin glass tube up the penis of Hungarian president Arpad Szakatis, and then crushing it, are said by Irving to be 'Jewish torture officials'.

On numerous occasions, Irving interrupts his narrative to interject the wholly extraneous fact of the individual's Jewish origin. Witness this line:

> In prison Kádár was spared no indignities. He was tortured to unconsciousness and came to his senses with the ÁVH (secret police) Colonel Vladimir Farkas — son of one of Rákosi's top Jewish cronies — urinating over his face.

In another passage, Irving refers to 'clever liars preying on Western sympathies, like the former "victims of Nazi concentration camps" [Irving's emphasis] who turned up in thousands to trick gullible Jewish relief agencies out of funds . . .'

IRVING'S PURPOSE in inflicting this type of Jew-baiting on the reader is to prepare us for his thesis that the '56 revolution was actually sparked off by latent anti-semitism, that the Hungarians, whom for these purposes he neatly casts in the role of a 'child-like and simple people', spontaneously revolted against a Jewish dictatorship. Irving tells us that 'the largely Jewish ÁVH officers' — he marshalls no evidence of this — quickly became the targets of a mob uprising that degenerated into a 'pogrom'.

He even goes so far as to suggest that the Soviet decision to invade was made to prevent such massacres: ' . . . nor can he [Krushchev] delay his action too long: at any moment a final pogrom may liquidate the country's remaining funkies [functionaries].'

Irving's 'evidence' is practically non-existent. He simply asserts that a high proportion of the Hungarian Communist Party's leadership was Jewish — without explaining that many Jews had joined the East European Communist parties who might have been liberals, social democrats or conservatives had it not been for Hitler and the fact that many right-wing political parties had proscribed Jews. Irving then quotes some anti-semitic sentiments gleaned from CIA-conducted interviews of '56 Hungarian refugees — interviews which he blithely calls 'a representative cross section' — and concludes that anti-semitism was the spark that touched off the 'uprising'. He conveniently ignores the fact that many card-carrying Jewish Communists, including factory workers as well as prominent members of the Writers' Union, such as Julius Háy, were ardent supporters of the revolution. Indeed, first-hand accounts (see *Eyewitness in Hungary*, Spokesman £8.50) suggest that Irving's 'mobs' never indiscri-

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Camera Press

Soviet tanks re-enter Budapest in November, 1956; the revolution collapses.

minately attacked either Jews or Communists.

Secret police officers were targets — but even Irving recounts how one large batch of frightened ÁVH men were simply disarmed and released after the battle for the radio station. Dora Scarlett, a British Communist reporter resident in Hungary for three years leading up to the revolution, wrote:

> I knew many communists of all shades and in varying capacities; some of them had no cause to fear, some were in mortal terror. But there was nothing indiscriminate about it. Public anger was not directed to 'Communists' as such.

The only specific 'pogrom' Irving cites is his description of the aftermath to the battle for Republic Square — where, he says, several dozen ÁVH secret police officers and ranking Communist officials from the Stalinist wing of the Party were brutally lynched. But few of these men are even identified as Jews.

In fact, buried in Chapter 39, Irving himself quotes the American Legation refuting his own thesis: '. . . nor has any evidence of anti-semitic outbursts become known to the legation.'

IF IRVING'S principal theme doesn't survive scrutiny, what he has to say about the current Hungarian regime is even more transparently propagandistic. He is excessively lavish in his praise of János Kádár, the man who betrayed Imre Nagy (the revolution's indecisive communist prime minister), crushed the partisan resistance with Soviet tanks, executed at least 2,000 rebels, including Party men like Nagy, and imprisoned thousands of others.

Irving, however, quickly dismisses Kádár's treachery and goes on to call him 'today one of Hungary's most genuinely popular citizens'. He claims that, 'In 1963 the last street level participants in the uprising were amnestied.' Irving ignores or does not know that this amnesty applied only to those prisoners classified as 'political'. Western scholars of Hungary know for a fact that some '56 rebels were still in prison during the Seventies.

Perhaps Irving's generous view of the Kádár regime can simply be chalked up to the fact that the Budapest *apparatchiks* cooperated with Irving. Scratch my back and I'll scratch yours. The unspoken understanding seems to be that Irving can be as nasty as he likes about the pre-1956 regimes — but his flattery of the Kádár government must know no bounds.

As the author says, 'That the present government, although aware of my intentions, allowed me in was an indication of progress in Hungary.'

How did Irving, of all people, win Budapest's confidence? Bill Lomax, a specialist on Hungary, asked Irving this question two years ago. Irving answered:

> The line I took with them four or five years ago was, I said when my book is published, it will probably be accepted in the West as being one of the most authoritative works because I'll get access to a lot of Western records, and if you want your own side of the story to be represented, at all, it is in your interest to let me in.

According to a transcript of Lomax's phone conversation with Irving, obtained by the *NS*, Irving seems to have accepted quite a bit of Budapest's cooperation.

He told Lomax that, 'I was given a woman contact, Erika László, of the Hungarian Foreign Office, as an interpreter.'

And Irving's main contact in Budapest turns out to be one Ervin Hollós, a lifetime official of the Hungarian secret police. After the revolution, from 1956-58, Hollós was responsible for drawing up the state prosecution briefs for the trials that resulted in the execution of some 2,000-3,000 people. Hollós now publishes official hack studies of the 'counter-revolution' from his chair as a professor at Budapest University.

Says Irving of Hollós: 'He was foisted on to me by the Hungarian Foreign Ministry. They said your contact man here will be Mr Hollós and he will *tutor* you, so to speak. The word was actually used. In other words, he would be the one standing by, jogging my elbow.'

Irving says Hollós wasn't very useful to him, though in early 1979 he was telling Lomax that he still hoped to get 'access to files' through him: 'Hollós has said that he's going to get some stuff out for me.'

Indeed, on one critical issue, Irving seems to have relied heavily on a 'confidential document furnished by an official historian in Budapest'. The document, says Irving, shows that 'Hungary's bloody losses were greatly exaggerated at the time'.

Admittedly, there are no definitive casualty figures — in such situations, there can't be. The Indian Embassy in Budapest estimated at the time that 25,000 Hungarians and 7,000 Soviet troops had been killed in Budapest alone. Peter Fryer, a staff reporter for the *Daily Worker,* estimated 'at least 20,000 Hungarians dead' and 3,500 Russians killed. (Fryer's dispatches were suppressed by his editor and when he returned to London Fryer resigned in protest from both the *Daily Worker* and the British Communist Party.)

Even if these figures are taken as 'exaggerated', it is still hard to accept Irving's official figure of only 2,500-3,000 Hungarians killed in the whole country. Irving unequivocally endorses the figures given him by the authorities, saying: 'There is no reason to doubt these figures.' That is simply not the case.

IN THIS BOOK, legendary heroes are mischievously turned into anti-heroes, a traitorous dictator becomes 'Hungary's Grand Old Man', the secret police become hunted Jews, the revolution a pogrom. Irving's only achievement is that he manages to weave these preposterous judgments into a dramatic narrative of the events of October-November 1956 in revolutionary Hungary.

If nothing else, *Uprising* should lay to rest the charitable assumption made by gentlemen historians that men like Irving would never stoop to dressing up their evidence. Irving not only has a consistent record of getting things wrong, but he clearly can't keep his noxious political affinities from turning his history into propaganda.

In fairness to Irving, it should be said that he may not recognise his product as propaganda. Rather, his love of intrigue and fawning respect for authoritarian sources lead inevitably to his viewing historical events in a conspiratorial light. The result is not even Irving's own creation; in fact, he ends by pimping a history as the secret police of the 20th century would like to see it. Thus it is that Irving can become a vehicle for both the authoritarian right and left, for both Hitler and Kádár. In the case of *Uprising*, the tragedy is that so many of the Hungarians whom Irving besmirches are dead — and thus the man who seems to have made a living out of historical slander will once again profit from his trade. □

Bill Lomax, the author of *Hungary in 1956* (Allison & Busby 1976) and editor of *Eyewitness in Hungary* Spokesman 1980), aided in the preparation of this review.

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Bill Buford

Art's inadequacy

Beyond the Crisis in Art by PETER FULLER *Writers & Readers* £6.95 & £3.95
Seeing Berger: A Revaluation by PETER FULLER *Writers & Readers* £1

Modern art has always assumed the values of originality: that the noteworthy will be found in the new. The history of Modernism is insistently linear, a chronology informed by a strict principle of progress. The current generation will be surpassed by the next one provided that, by the newness of the new 'solutions' it argues, it can be perceived *as* a generation. Like the science of the technological age in which it develops, art cannot step backward.

The 20th century is shaped not by the vanguard but by a series of vanguards: our relationship with the past is defined by opposition to it. The eerie reductions of Rothko 'answered' Action Painting, itself the sequel to social realism. Pop Art, agreeably equating Bat Man, a neon cheeseburger and a sunset by Turner, arrived like the manifest destiny of modern aesthetics: art predicated on art. Now, after Minimalism, the colour-field painters, and whatever else, we have the black canvas, the empty canvas, the painted but buried canvas, the framed but non-existent canvas, participating in a quiet series *progressing* to degree zero. My favourite is remarkable for the inventiveness of its vacuity: a detailed report of a Happening that never took place. The work is the press releases, accounts and interviews: representations of a representation of nothing.

Decades are crude ways for journalists to tell time, and the most important feature of any chronicle of the Seventies is its failure to make a meaningful statement. We learn only that nothing, as idea and (somehow) substance, can be replicated an infinite number of ways. It is not that the generation of the Seventies has failed to perform, but that it was not new enough to be new: what you hear is the echo of an echo of a previous generation's noise.

IT IS a fashionable gesture to declare the end of Modernism; it is also futile, if only because the perceived end is obviously providing so many with so much employment. Peter Fuller's *Beyond the Crisis in Art* differs from most other dismissals of the age by the force of its inevitably prescriptive preposition: the promise of the blue beyond. This is transcendent criticism aspiring to show that there is life after death, even if only an aesthetic one. What lies on the other side of the rainbow is more than a pot of gold: it is, among other canvases, a realistic depiction of — it's true — the human body.

The difficulty with this book is not in its sentiment, for everyone, except subsidised modernists, is desperate for a way out of the crisis of self-consciousness. But Fuller, like so many self-appointed critics of the avant-weird, fails to understand indirect modes of affirmation; fails to understand that contemporary art does, at least, represent contemporary reality. The old standards of the 20th century — the metaphor of alienation or the philistine entrenchment of the bourgeois — no longer apply (ours is an adversary culture but not one afraid of selling out; the phrase itself smacks of nostalgia — French cigarettes, dark bars, berets, anguish).

Twenty-five years ago, Rosenberg confessed bewilderment, witnessing a generation that felt the necessity of having to bathe in the waters around it to register the degrees of pollution. The ambiguity continues to be emblematic of the artist's relationship to the environment today. The ostensibly unrelated modes of art of the last two decades recognise an existence dominated by advertising, entertainment industries, and the impermanent sprawl of journalism and television. The problem of contemporary art is that it speaks of, *and* sometimes for, the conditions of our culture: it can't accommodate it, won't answer for it, and withholds an interpretation of it. Art does not, that is, provide the assurance of the standard by which to measure distortion; but it does provide what people must interact with.

I keep wanting to take *Beyond the Crisis* as seriously as it takes itself, but no reasonable person can. Fuller is the wrong man for irony, parody, detachment, wit, humour, or fun; it is not inconceivable that he is the wrong critic for contemporary art. The interest of his work, obviously, is less in his doomsday denunciations than in his determination to lift Marxist aesthetics out of the confines of its insistently unsatisfactory scientism. This determination occasions *Seeing Berger*. Berger's *Ways of Seeing* is a valuable, even if 'one-off' polemic. By arguing, however, that all art is determined by ideology, *Ways of Seeing* is, Fuller suggests, representative of the predictable reductionism of most Marxist critics. It excludes the concerns by which we judge one work to be of more value than another: what Fuller describes as 'the material process of painting' — that is, paint and the conventions of using it — and the relationship of art to 'areas of experience and potentiality which are long lasting in human history'.

Fuller elaborates an aesthetic that locates value in art in the psycho-biological constants of the human condition — 'the search for an authenticity of expression' — which he uses, in his jog through the last four decades, to develop a check-list of those that that are *in* (Rothko, Golub, Pollock, Auerbach, Kossoff, Bomberg and, curiously, Hockney) and those are *out* (everyone else). Ultimately, however, I fail to see how the psycho-bio line is anything but a vapid vindication of the old platitude, evoked here countless times, that art must be universal ('something timeless and enduring from age to age'). This says, like most of Fuller's polemic, everything and nothing, full of possibilities until they are actually applied. I can't see how one settles down to taking the dimensions of the 'Universal' or when and where I'm able to perceive the constants of my psyche or, more interestingly, my biology replicated on a canvas. Is it in the representation of poking, thrusting, belching, farting, evacuating, decaying, consuming that this universal lies? Or is it in that existential angst — the tired modernist moan of isolation — that Fuller finds so important? Fuller, I am suggesting, is symptomatic of the thinking he most often attacks, suffering what M. H. Abrams describes as the hardening of the categories: Fuller is dreadfully full of Fullerisms.

Beyond the Crisis in Art is important as a register, a cultural seismology, pointing to the felt inadequacy of an art that too often does little more than discharge chunks of modern experience in a form to giggle at. In the end, however, Fuller's critical apparatus is not strong enough to bear the weight of the 'Beyond' he argues for. Nor, really, should it be. For the nature of the crisis — theoretical over-determination — presupposes that the way out, the way to the beyond, must be provided not by the critic but the artist. □

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Alex Callinicos on marxist views of culture and class

Ideologies in disorder

Problems in Materialism and Culture by RAYMOND WILLIAMS *New Left Books/Verso* £10 & £3.95

The Ideology of Power and the Power of Ideology by GÖRAN THERBORN *New Left Books/Verso* £6 & £2.50

The Dominant Ideology Thesis by NICHOLAS ABERCROMBIE, STEPHEN HILL and BRYAN S. TURNER *Allen & Unwin* £12.50

British Marxism, at least in the form in which it is taught and studied in academic institutions, is in an interesting state of flux. The old division between those who derived their inspiration and methods of inquiry from the Parisian avant garde of the 1960s and those who drew mainly on native British traditions of critical thought seems to be blurring as attempts are made to accommodate both approaches within a more catholic 'Anglo-marxism'. Such a move is proposed, for example, by Perry Anderson at the end of his *Arguments within English Marxism*.

The work of Raymond Williams would be central to any such reconciliation. At the time when he wrote his two best known books, *Culture and Society* and *The Long Revolution,* some 20 years ago, Williams did not regard himself as a marxist at all. This seems to be chiefly because his insistence on seeing society as an intrinsic, indissoluble unity, combined with a focus on culture — roughly, those practices through which experience is assimilated and interpreted — had led Williams to reject what he calls 'the received (marxist) formula of base and superstructure'. His subsequent discovery in the writings of Georg Lukács and Lucien Goldmann of a marxist tradition which laid similar stress on conceiving society as a totality seems to have overcome many of Williams's reservations. His position, however, remains distinctive. At its core is what he calls 'cultural materialism', 'a theory of culture as a (social and material) productive process and of specific practices, of "arts", as social uses of material means of production'.

This approach, with its emphasis less on the global class subjects posited by Lukács and Goldmann in their aesthetic writings than on the specific conditions of production of works of art, bears some similarities to structuralist and post-structuralist cultural theories, whose proponents also prefer to see art as a process of material transformation subject to distinctive laws and constraints.

The difficulty lies in reconciling such a view with Williams's continued refusal to analyse society into separate elements. He argues that if the social whole is to be conceived of as more than a mere collection of 'miscellaneous and contemporaneous practices' then we require the 'notion of intention' to give society a 'specific organisation' deriving from the existence of 'a central system of practices, meanings and values', namely those of the ruling class. A social formation, therefore, owes its unity to the 'dominant and effective culture' within it. But surely the political and cultural hegemony of a particular class itself requires explanation in terms of class struggle. And such an explanation is likely to take us closer to a traditional marxist emphasis on the primacy of production relations than Williams seems even now willing to concede.

Nevertheless one can see how Williams's evolution enables him to some degree to bridge the gap between the two main tendencies in 'Anglo-marxism'. This is partly a matter of intellectual style. The essays gathered together in *Problems in Materialism and Culture,* written at different times over the past 20 years and ranging from the Victorian theatre to Rudolph Bahro, reveal a mind ever open to new ideas yet careful to subject them to critical scrutiny. A comparison with Edward Thompson's *The Poverty of Theory* is instructive: despite the many opinions these two stalwarts of the old New Left share, Williams's writings are quite free of the rancour and self-indulgence that often mar Thompson's essays.

IT IS INTERESTING, moreover, to see how Williams's views sometimes overlap with those of Göran Therborn, a regular contributor to *New Left Review* greatly influenced by Louis Althusser. One of Williams's objections to marxism lies in the latter's attempts to regiment the 'complex social relations' involved in culture under the concept of ideology, namely 'a general, coherent and monopolising practical consciousness' which merely registers changes in the economic base. Therborn also is critical of Marx's theory of ideology. This theory was summarised by Jorge Larrain in his recent survey, *The Concept of Ideology,* as that of 'a distorted consciousness . . . (with) two specific and interconnected features . . . firstly, that it conceals social contradictions and, secondly, that it does it in the interests of the ruling class'. According to Therborn such an account presupposes that human behaviour is determined by class interests, which consciousness either reveals (science) or conceals (ideology). This presumption, he argues, represents 'a utilitarian residue in marxism, which should be rejected, explicitly and decisively, once and for all'. Therborn prefers something closer to Williams's 'culture', ideology not as illusion or deception but rather a view of the world, 'that aspect of the human condition under which human beings live their lives as conscious actors in a world that makes sense to them to varying degrees'. He goes on to discuss the material determinants of ideologies, their role in class formation, their internal organisation and the part they play in preventing or stimulating social revolution.

Much of what Therborn has to say is both interesting and important. For example, he stresses the fact that 'ideologies actually operate in a state of *disorder*' rather than, as marxists of all schools have tended to believe, as a unitary substance which effortlessly invades all aspects of social life, binding individuals to the status quo. Moreover, he persuasively argues that fear and resignation are as important in sustaining popular consent to an exploitative social order as any positive belief in its right to exist, in contrast to the almost magical powers of turning people into zombies attributed to ideology by thinkers as different as Althusser and Marcuse.

Therborn's argument suffers, however, from the very high level of abstraction at which it is conducted — he discusses ideology in general, and tends to indulge his taste for comparative analyses and typologies which are often truistic, uninformative or confusing. Furthermore, he retains the idea, inherited from Althusser, that ideologies prepare individuals for specific roles in the social division of labour, a notion with strong, and unacceptable, functionalist overtones.

Finally, I'm not sure that one actually can deny that human behaviour is motivated by class interests and yet retain, as Therborn does, the marxist thesis that 'the structure of the ideological system . . . is over-determined by the constellation of class forces'. Can one have class struggle without class interests?

NICHOLAS Abercrombie, Stephen Hill and Bryan Turner go even further than Therborn in their criticisms of traditional theories of ideology. Their target is Marx's and Engels's declaration in *The German Ideology* that 'the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas'. Historical evidence, they argue, suggests that the ideology of the ruling class has never received general popular acceptance; the main function of the 'dominant and effective culture' has been to unify the ruling class itself, and in particular to ensure the transmission of the property accumulated by one generation to another by inculcating respect for the family and so on.

Since, in modern capitalism, it is the corporation and not the individual property owner which is the main economic agent, the ruling ideology no longer has even this function. Hence the various signs of ideological crisis at a time when, paradoxically, the evolution of the means of communication has led to a wider diffusion of ruling-class ideas than ever before. The view of ideology as the cement of society shared by marxists and sociologists alike, clashes with the opinions, not only of the mature Marx but also of Durkheim and Weber, all of whom saw the 'dull compulsion of economic relations' and political coercion as the main sources of social integration. Such, brutally summarised, are the main theses of an enormously

Note

An even more recent publication by Raymond Williams — *Culture* — is now available in the Fontana New Sociology series at £2.50. In it Professor Williams 'outlines an historical sociology of cultural institutions and formations, discusses the problem of analysing "schools" and "movements" . . . and describes the means of cultural production from the point of view of cultural materialism'. Also available in this new series are *Class and the Corporation* by Graeme Salaman and *Social Mobility* by Anthony Heath, both at £2.50.

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stimulating and provocative book which deserves very wide discussion. It also has the rare merit in works of this nature of being resolutely empirical in its approach. May it have many imitators. □

Steve Schifferes

Decent homes for everyone

Homes Fit for Heroes by MARK SWENARTON
Heinemann Educational £14.50
Housing and Social Justice by GILL BURKE
Longman £4.50

At a time when the consensus on the need for state-aided council housing has collapsed, Mark Swenarton's book is a welcome addition to the growing literature on the origins of that consensus which was shaped at the end of the first world war. Unlike other elements of the welfare state in Britain, the principle of council housing, managed by local government but subsidised by central government, was accepted by all political parties by the 1920s. Britain's performance in building state housing between the wars — one million units were constructed, representing ten per cent of the housing stock — far exceeded that of her continental partners.

Unlike many previous historians of the welfare state, Swenarton does not see a gradualist progression of housing standards and housing provision due to the enlightened Fabianism of the state bureaucracy; a view which in any case is being undermined by the current Government. Nor does he follow traditional historians of housing, who see prosperity bringing rising standards. Rather he is prepared to explain both improvements in housing standards and state provision as resulting from the balance of class forces — most notably the surge of working-class militancy during and immediately after World War 1. The book's strength lies in its ability to relate the growth of working-class agitation on the housing question to the improvement in housing design and layout that had been pre-figured in the Garden City movement.

SWENARTON traces the thread through the uncertain attempts by the Ministry of Defence to provide war workers with housing to the triumphant emergence of the Tudor-Walters Report (1918) with its call for working-class homes with inside bathroom, three bedrooms and a parlour. He demonstrates the influence of industrial unrest on the housing programme that emerged after the war, and attributes the decline of this first housing campaign (the 1919 Addison Act) to the pressures of the City and Treasury. As today, cuts to the housing programme were preceded by a vigorous press campaign to discredit the 'squandermania' of the house building programme — a campaign which was helped by the Government's decision not to control building in the private sector, with the result that pent-up demand soon pushed building prices up to unprecedented levels. By 1922 the housing programme was completely dead — a victim of the Geddes public expenditure axe.

But this was not the whole story of council housing between the wars. Swenarton adopts perhaps too functionalist a perspective as a corrective to the inevitable gradualism of previous historians. In the style of Piven and Cloward, the well-known American writers on welfare reform, he argues that protest brings concessions which are withdrawn when that protest ceases. But within two years Britain had again embarked on an even more ambitious council house-building programme, which was trimmed but not eliminated in the remaining 15 years of Tory control of Parliament. One reason was that council housing had become institutionalised within the Labour Party, whose support at the municipal level went hand-in-hand with local electoral success. Swenarton also perhaps underestimates the effects of the major working-class housing victory of the war — a national system of rent control —in making further state intervention inevitable (by restricting the continuation of private renting).

IT HAS been the growth of owner-occupation in the post-war period which distinguishes the present period from the inter-war years. Crucial to the push for higher housing standards was the aspiration of the ordinary working-class family for a decent council house as the only way to resolve their housing difficulties —an aspiration which politicians of all parties could not ignore. Today it is owner-occupation not council housing which appears to satisfy that aspiration. It is undoubtedly this fact that has led the Government to concentrate 75 per cent of all public spending cuts on housing. Both political parties now agree that their object should be the promotion of owner-occupation, their disagreement being only about means.

The reality as opposed to the rhetoric of the present situation is usefully outlined in Gill Burke's social policy text. The result of the weakening of the public sector's original role as provider of first resort into that of provider of last resort has been one of the emerging trends of the Seventies; the private rented sector finally reached rock-bottom and council allocation policies increasingly accepted families who would not previously have qualified for council housing. One result of the early start of public housing in Britain has been its legacy of paternalistic management practices inherited directly from the philanthropic housing of the late 19th century. Within public housing there is now conflict between looking after the 'respectable' tenant and an increasing role as supplier of 'welfare' housing. The collapse of the post-war consensus has left the council sector vulnerable to this potentially explosive conflict which is presently being expressed in questions of priority between homeless families and those on the waiting list, a conflict which can only intensify in times of shortage.

As *Housing and Social Justice* demonstrates, what appeared just a few years ago as a universal commitment to the right of everyone to a decent home now seems very far away. Housing has always had a more

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Patrick Cormack
With a foreword by the Rt Hon George Thomas, Speaker of the House of Commons

A thoroughly readable, well illustrated, general history of the building and what goes on inside it. This magnificent book seeks to give 'the feel' of the place and to be 'guide, philosopher and friend' to all who are fascinated by Westminster, the Mother of Parliaments. '... it is a good and ingenious book. In fact it is an excellent guide book for the visitor, a useful record for posterity, enjoyable even for those who will never see Westminster and are not politicians — indeed for them perhaps its value is greatest. For Patrick Cormack is very readable so that even the most grumpy cynic may find himself reading on, looking at the pictures and mellowing a little towards his elected representatives.... Mr Cormack... has succeeded better than most professional historians in writing a short history of Parliamentary government. This book opens the eyes and the mind and what more could you demand?' —**The Rt Hon Jo Grimond MP; The Irish Times.** **£9.95 net**

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ambiguous legacy than the rest of the welfare state; its early acceptance was coupled with an acceptance of the mixed economy and the predominance of the private sector. But the crucial factor has been the change in Labour perceptions of the role of the state sector. Labour too is now committed to a private sector; but the private sector is unable to provide for all in times of recession. Hence the future of council housing now seems to be in provision for the victims' of the failed welfare state, not for heroes of a war-time victory. □

FICTION — 1

Nicholas Shrimpton

True-life stories

A Man by ORIANA FALLACI *Bodley Head* £6.50
The Radiant Future by ALEXANDER ZINOVIEV *Bodley Head* £7.50
A Great Love by ALEXANDRA KOLLONTAI *Virago* £2.50

East is East and West is West and both are full of bastards. That, at least, would seem to be the moral of this collection of novels — a consistently jaundiced set of bulletins from both sides of the Cold War and one side of the battle of the sexes. Disillusionment, on this occasion, goes hand in hand with conspicuous expertise, for the correspondents who file these sour reports all do so from positions of unusual privilege. Alexandra Kollontai wrote her *roman à clef* about Lenin's affair with Inessa Armand as an intimate friend of both participants. Alexander Zinoviev describes the demeaning compromises of Soviet intellectual life with the venom of a recently exiled dissident. And Oriana Fallaci, most startlingly of all, is the heroine of her own historical narrative. She was, in real life, the lover of Alexandros Panagoulis. Her account of their relationship, and of his heroic life and death, is as extreme an example of the non-fiction novel as we are ever likely to see.

The very form of *A Man* makes this peculiar closeness perpetually apparent. The book is written as a sustained address to its dead hero, so that dramatic event emerges as a sort of catechism: 'You checked the time . . . You sat on the back seat . . . You had chosen him because he was a cousin.' The erotic episodes, in which the author is directly involved, do allow some relief from this strangely admonitory method. But even there it is sometimes hard to forget that Signorina Fallaci is by trade a political interviewer, and to separate impassioned confession from the getting and checking of copy. It is a tribute to the power and excitement of the story which she has to tell that such annoyances of manner come in the end to count for very little.

Panagoulis was doing military service in the Greek army at the time of the Colonels' coup. Believing that obedience to rebel officers was a violation of his military oath, he deserted and, in August 1968, attempted to assassinate the dictator George Papadopoulos. Five years of imprisonment and torture followed, before international pressure forced the Junta to release him. After a period of exile he eventually returned to become a member of the new Greek parliament. But his unrelenting pursuit of those who had secretly served the previous regime made him a marked man and when, in May 1976, he was killed in a road accident there were immediate claims that his death was an act of political murder. This novel (originally published in Italy in 1979) is an impassioned contribution to that campaign.

Its urgent polemical purposes do not, however, constitute the sole interest of *A Man*. If Oriana Fallaci's unusual intimacy with her subject occasionally prompts uncomfortable feelings about journalistic (or even novelistic) objectivity, it also makes possible a remarkable depth of insight into his motives. Panagoulis's opposition to fascism did not spring from clear left-wing beliefs. Rather it was rooted in a set of democratic and libertarian assumptions which were difficult to reconcile with any political party. Returning to Greece as a national hero, after the collapse of the dictatorship, he proved to be an inept practical politician.

The point is partly that the character of the martyr and the character of the effective leader are very different things. But Oriana Fallaci goes beyond this to suggest the devastating effect of uncompleted martyrdom on subsequent life. Panagoulis was led out to execution and belatedly reprieved on three separate occasions. This novel does not merely describe a modern Coriolanus, a hero better at self-sacrifice than he is at compromise. It depicts a man haunted by the idea of his own death and attempting to conduct a political life under the shadow of that obsession.

THE VILLAINS in *A Man* are military leaders who became self-appointed politicians. The villains in *The Radiant Future* are politicians whose most egregious folly has been their recent decision to make themselves, retrospectively, into military heroes. President Brezhnev is memorably summed up, in verse, as 'A general who has won no victory'.

As the tone of that gibe suggests, however, villainy is not really the central target of Alexander Zinoviev's satire. He's certainly aware of moral turpitude and is offended by it. But his main charge against contemporary Soviet life is that it is crippled by a profound and deadly stupidity. The narrator of *The Radiant Future* is a time-serving academic who heads the Department of Theoretical Problems of the Methodology of Scientific Communism. His bumbling attempts to keep his conscience clear and his ideology untwisted are cruelly juxtaposed with the clear-eyed cynicism of his children and the genuine intellectual penetration of his disenchanted friend Zimin.

The way in which that juxtaposition is achieved is not likely to impress the reader who seeks formal polish. This is a rough and ready book which is not afraid to mix sophisticated philosophical argument with crude farce and popular political gags. But it is marvellously funny and effective, and it proves to have a stronger sense of shape than might at first seem possible. At its heart lies Zimin's brilliantly ironical celebration of Soviet communism. And its unexpectedly sombre conclusion is the suicide of the narrator's daughter when she discovers that it was her own well-meaning father who originally betrayed Zimin to the Gulag.

Alexandra Kollontai's *A Great Love* is also concerned with the home life of the Bolsheviks, in this case probably (though not absolutely certainly) with the doings of Lenin himself. If the identification is correct, then the Leninist theory of sexual relations would seem to be 'Treat 'em mean, keep 'em keen'. The beautiful and talented Natasha falls in love with the great leader-in-exile. He promptly belittles her work, borrows her money and doesn't bother with foreplay. So distressed is she by this discovery of an MCP at the head of the CPSU that at one point she wonders 'how he would respond if she called him an ugly old fat-face'. I bet Zinoviev's characters could tell her. □

FICTION — 2

Helen McNeil

Desperate measures

Tit for Tat by VERITY BARGATE *Cape* £5.95

In *Tit for Tat*, Verity Bargate's strongest novel yet, her heroine, the aptly named Sadie, has the right history for one of those female victims so familiar in recent fiction. Her mother's house 'was so full of silence they didn't need much furniture'. Sadie, however, survives until happiness intervenes in the form of the normal — and very credibly drawn — Tim, whom she loves and marries. She even discovers a long-lost aunt Chris, so she has a slightly too earth-motherish friend. Ominous events like the cancer death of Sadie's mother and a septic abortion seem merely a realistic backdrop to romance. Sadie and Tim get used to floating upon a cushion of little white lies, the kind that come out when 'one lets it a moment too long' and the truth would spoil the conversation.

But, after its honeymoon with happiness, the story begins to go hideously askew about half-way through. Sadie imagines that Tim has been unfaithful to her, and she plans a visceral revenge. Knowing at least on one level how much he does love and desire her, she'll take away that part of her that's most his. So they both suffer horribly. Sardonic, economical and terrifying, *Tit for Tat* must rank as one of the most brutally direct accounts of self-destruction in recent fiction. It's not a novel that makes for quiet sleep.

Verity Bargate's three novels are all about desperate women who commit extreme acts of transformation to show they're alive. In *No, Mama, No* a mother gets on to a train with two little boys and gets off it with the same children dressed as girls, magically granting herself the daughters she wished for in a world in which normal, sane wishes never come true. In *Children Crossing*, when the heroine's two daughters are killed almost as punishment for her having loved them to begin with, she pretends to their

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father that the girls aren't there because they simply can't bear to see him. In *Tit for Tat,* childless Sadie mutilates herself to punish her genuinely loving husband. The wages for this sort of sin is death.

From the point of view of the man, this female masochist is an equally efficient sadist. Tim cries, 'You should change your name. Sadistic would do for starters.' Sadie has developed the specialised female entropic talent that Martin Amis in *Other People* has wisely defined as 'make feel bad'. The bad feeling Verity Bargate describes, however, has a bleak objectivity about it. 'God's a Tory. All those cuts,' remarks the dying Chris. I recommend *Tit for Tat* to critics who think novels about suffering are always self-indulgent. For Sadie the struggle towards honesty requires a strength she doesn't have. It's so much easier to lie, suffer, and get on towards death. Sadie unsettlingly retains our sympathy long after her actions have become monstrous.

AS SUSAN Sontag pointed out so movingly in *Illness as Metaphor,* cancer serves as the modern symbol for an ill that eats away from the inside, as if self-generated. In *Tit for Tat* Sadie pretends she has cancer and has a mastectomy, thus making herself a victim for ever. 'You're like an ethnic minority now,' says a friendly nurse: Sadie's fake cancer works as a metaphor for her falsely motivated consuming jealousy, but it is also the real thing, the same way the mother's grief in *Children Crossing* is both real and a way of putting her heroine in a situation of absolute suffering and innocence.

At a time when even the mention of cancer is still taboo in literature (remember that charmingly unnamed disease in *Love Story*), Verity Bargate has written an incredibly brave novel above the inner experience of cancer. Sadie's self-induced terror is a way of showing that even that most absolute of victims, the cancer patient, may conclude that she has somehow deserved her suffering, since the alternative of totally random fatality is even more disgusting. As the nurse hints, this kind of victim is indeed a sacred 'monster' since she reminds us of the bleakest reality of all, the triumph of death over love.

In the 29 March *South Bank Show* programme about Verity Bargate, Melvin Bragg asked her how she has promoted women's theatre in her capacity as Artistic Director of the Soho Poly theatre since 1975. 'I don't see that that needs to be discussed', she replied. The 'women's writing' question is irrelevant in relation to *Tit for Tat,* but for different reasons. *Tit for Tat* begins with a romance plot only slightly modified from the classic 'women's novel' repertoire, then lets the romance, its 'truth' eaten away anyway by mutual lies, get shoved off-stage by nasty physical truths. But *Tit for Tat*'s anti-romantic theme isn't that new romanticism of the sensitive woman impaled on the horns of love. It's about blood repetition. The blood of our mother in our veins means that we shall repeat her life and death, whether or not we like her or it. There are several contemporary novelists who depict women in extreme states: Caroline Blackwood, Elizabeth Smart, Beryl Bainbridge, Fay Weldon, Alice Thomas Ellis. Some are more consistent writers than Verity Bargate. None have her sense of play with feminine literary modes, and none have her passionate instinct for gut-wrenching truth. □

Ted Honderich

What's in a neuron?

Essays on Action and Events by DONALD DAVIDSON *Oxford* £14 & £4.95

Donald Davidson remarks that one of the essays in this collection was written in a Vienna café. That might suggest to someone who has not kept up with philosophy that his writings have about them something of the past, no doubt the faded moment of Existentialism. It might also suggest just a touch of the dilettante. That would be all wrong. His book is an exemplar of philosophy as it is in English at this moment, and he is one of three or four active candidates in the running for being the philosophers' philosopher.

One of his principal concerns is the nature of the mind. His view of it, and the character of a good part of his philosophy, can be got from one fundamental argument. It has to do, also, with the philosophical problem that does not go away, although Davidson has little time for it, which is that of determinism and our seemingly opposed conviction that we are free and responsible agents.

The first proposition is that mental events and physical events cause one another. Someone's idea did indeed cause the explosion, and the explosion certainly caused some ideas. The second proposition is that wherever one finds cause and effect, one find the two things connected in some way by natural or scientific law. If one thing happened the other *had* to happen. However, these first two propositions appear to contradict a third: that there are no lawlike connections between the mental and the physical. Obviously we know certain generalisations about the relations of wants, beliefs and the like to physical events, but such generalisations do not amount to stiff scientific laws.

THE WAY out of the contradiction, we learn, depends on seeing that the second proposition is what it is and nothing more. It is true that if two events are cause and effect they are connected *in some way* by natural law. That is not necessarily to say that a mental event *as* mental, or *under the description* of being mental, is in lawlike connection with the physical event it causes. Since the third proposition denies this possibility, the truth must be that the mental event is otherwise or more than we have so far supposed. It must fall under another description, a physical description. It must itself be identical with a physical event, a physical event in the brain.

The upshot, then, is an Identity Theory of mind and brain. Thoughts are neural events. Still, that is not the end, nor of course the distinctive feature of this picture of the mind. If there are no lawlike connections between the mental and the physical then it follows that the mental event of my seeing Dora wasn't in such connection with the Valentine's being where it is, although it caused it. It also follows that the mental event was not in lawlike connection with the neural event with which it was identical. If freedom and responsibility require that we somehow escape from the grip of scientific law, then here is where we get away.

That is Davidson's argument, stripped to the rattling bones, for Anomalous Monism, the lawless oneness of mind and brain. It is a brand new argument, one that exemplifies the prime virtues of philosophy, which are rigour and imagination. By itself, I think, it would be enough to attract stern and zealous graduate students to the University of Chicago, where its author is now in residence.

THAT IS not to say that all agree with the argument. Davidson does not take himself to have proved the third proposition: that there are no psychophysical lawlike connections. Still he is not short of reasons for it. They have to do, in part, with the true idea that ascribing mental events to someone requires that we take him to be rational in at least a minimal way. However, description of what is physical, say movements and synapses, requires no such assumption. The mental is a matter of the postulate of rationality, but the physical is a matter of such postulates as transitivity: if A is greater than B, and B greater than C, then A is greater than C. The reasoning, for all its compelling interest, strikes me as elusive.

Admittedly, the Identity Theory in question is not worn materialism, the curious idea that only matter exists, an idea now mainly confined to Australia. As Davidson remarks, his Identity Theory is not apt to inspire the nothing-but reflex, as in 'Conceiving the *Art of the Fugue* was nothing but a complex neural event'. The mental is not drummed out of the universe. But then what exactly does the assertion of psychophysical identity come to? What is it for something *as mental* to be identical with something *as physical?* Can it be that it is for the thing to have a mental part or property and a physical part or property? *That* would make for mystery, trouble, and, in fact, the non-identity of the mental and the physical.

The three parts of the book are in several ways interdependent, but only one part is taken up with Anomalous Monism. Another has at its centre an account of the nature of reasons and actions, and the causal relation between them. It defeats a great deal of Wittgensteinian doctrine. A third part, in some ways the most difficult, advances a conception of events generally and of causation. The essays here, like many of the others, gave rise to an industry of elaboration and criticism when they were first published in the philosophical journals. It shows little sign of being a declining industry.

It is no accident that the café essay was read to Section 9, Division on Methodology and Philosophy of the Psychological Sciences, Fourth International Congress for Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science. *Actions and Events* is not directed at a general audience, and not an easy read. Its sentences require concentration, sometimes

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prolonged concentration, not because of obscurity or ramble or jargon, but because of economy, some allusiveness, and a certain recourse to the technical in order to achieve precision. The book is an absolutely admirable one. Struggle and learn. □

Jonathan Mirsky

Meeting Comrade Right

The Politics of Marriage in Contemporary China by ELISABETH CROLL *Cambridge* £16

The very idea of marriage drove many Chinese women to kill themselves, in both traditional society and under the new People's Republic. One of Mao Zedong's earliest published essays, 'Miss Chao's Suicide', asked why a woman engaged by her parents in 1919 to a man she had never met, took her own life.

'If Miss Chao is dead today,' the Chairman observed, 'it is because she was solidly enclosed by the three iron nets (society, her own family, the family of her future husband); she sought life in vain and finally was led to seek death.'

Yet even today in China's post-revolutionary countryside, the authorities admit, great numbers of women find themselves in arranged marriages following traditional betrothal ceremonies, dowry transfers, and even the provision of sedan chairs for the bride. In 1964, for instance, when a rural groom suggested that his fiancée arrive for the wedding in some up-to-date manner, she replied, 'when other people get married, the bride either sits in a sedan chair or rides a horse, and if I walk to your door people will talk.'

THIS ANECDOTE appears in Elisabeth Croll's *The Politics of Marriage in Contemporary China*, one of the few books which can shift our deepest convictions about China's history and about revolution itself.

Croll's first book was *Feminism and Socialism in China* (1978). Although *The Politics of Marriage* is her dissertation for an anthropology PhD, it is essentially jargon-free. Where professional language is necessary, Croll defines it.

An inevitable difficulty handicaps but does not cripple Croll's study: it remains impossible to undertake a lengthy field study in China. In Peking last December I met America's two best-known anthropologists of China who, after two years of chivvying and disappointed plans, had finally been permitted a few skimpy visits to the countryside. Croll has managed a brief tour in 1973, and 10 days interviewing in one Cantonese village in 1977.

In other anthropological areas such limited direct experience would be professionally derided, but it's all you get in the People's Republic, which has viewed its own anthropologists with suspicion or, during the Cultural Revolution, with hatred.

So Croll has done the next best thing: rummaged in decades of documents containing regulations and directives, and read the letters of the Chinese equivalent of Dear Mary Grant, in which young people awaiting marriage or already married express to the newspapers their hopes and frustrations.

Croll tackles one of the biggest questions about China and other revolutionary societies: when their reforms fail or fall short, is it because the traditional lattice resists the revolutionists' wrecking ball or — a difficult thesis to demonstrate — is there something about the regime's policies *themselves* which reinforces what the Chinese call 'feudalism', the code word for 'bad old society'?

Now, the routine explanation for this is China's 'feudalism' and its 'backwardness', which are bad, almost personal, habits, and difficult to break.

But if under revolutionary directives women can no longer be bought and sold or have their feet bound, are limited to one child, and, above all, nearly all work for money, why are boy babies still prized above girls, why do divorces hardly occur, and why in the countryside, where 80 per cent of the Chinese live, are most engagements still the result of introduction? And why is parental consent still so important?

IT IS *because* of Party policies, Croll maintains, *not despite* them.

Her proposition contains a huge irony: the Party's marriage laws, *per se*, from the first ones 50 years ago, have always been progressive. Nonetheless, says Croll, the commune system initiated in the late Fifities, has toughened the authority of the male, the old, the neighbours, and the village — Croll's 'primary groups'.

Migration away from home was reduced as the social and economic ties within and between villages were tightened in the interests of economic efficiency. Young women remained segregated in their work and leisure, subjects of gossip if seen speaking with a man. Only young political activists, with access to events away from home, stood much of a chance of spontaneously encountering Comrade Right.

Rural girls still marry into their husbands' families to which they are an instant economic asset, simultaneously registering as an economic debit in their own families, whose 'investment' is now lost. Croll's own village survey disclosed that families with sons exhibited 'a degree of confidence and investment in the future . . . planning and saving for future expansion when all the sons would marry and recruit wives . . .' Families with daughters, by contrast, made no such happy plans.

Since the household is the basis for commune accounting, including the private plots allotted per capita (extra land for each new wife), and since the rural household budget is reckoned collectively, women in fact do not possess economic independence. The traditional — male — family head continues to make the key decisions. Women *do* participate fully in income-producing work, profitable side-line occupations, and, as ever, perform most of the unpaid domestic chores. What they lack is the power to alter their personal lives.

Urban women, by contrast, control more of their incomes, tend not to live in their father-in-laws' houses, and are likelier to move from job to job. Croll shows that these factors enable Chinese city girls to more truly choose their marriage partners and, if necessary, to divorce them.

Almost all the Chinese literature contains examples of 'model' women. But they are model *workers*. One looks in vain for the model *feminist* who has struck heroic blows for domestic or sexual liberty.

Croll's conclusion is that:

> the new economic policies have contributed to the maintenance of the sanctions traditionally imposed by the primary group . . . the older generation have maintained their control . . . and (modified) the new ideology in their interests.

Traditional values remain. 'Ask not if he is a member of the Youth League,' runs one rural aphorism, 'ask not if he is in the Party, but ask only if he has money.' One Croll report from the Sixties says it all:

> I shall marry a man whose hair is groomed, who wears leather shoes, and carries a watch; I shall not marry one whose head is clear-shaven, who handles a hoe and works with a pick. □

Anthony Delano

Come coppering

Slipper of the Yard by JACK SLIPPER *Sidgwick* £5.95

Ronnie Biggs: His Own Story *Michael Joseph* £7.95

It would have been downright unsporting to offer Jack Slipper's account of his lifetime of collar-feeling to anyone else for sentencing. Or, likewise, Ronald Biggs's own version of his finest hours. My own book, *Slip Up,* about the celebrated failure to bring Ronnie Biggs back from Rio in 1974 made the six-foot-three Detective Chief Inspector the best-known copper in the country (something *he* has always been quite sporting about) and Ronnie a far more famous villain than his form really justifies.

Since Biggsie was shanghaied by a bunch of flesh-peddling goons — and will now do his best in typically ham-fisted fashion to publicise his own 30 years on the wrong end of the handcuffs — he will probably upstage poor Slipper yet again in print.

BEFORE dealing with the somewhat belated and highly defensive evidence Slipper provides in this retirement autobiography, it deserves to be noted that, the Biggs chapters apart, this is a rewarding old-fashioned read of the kind that was once such a welcome staple of Sunday newspapers. It is a useful and informative reminder of what, as Slipper would say, coppering is all about.

In particular, it tells what the Flying Squad in its heyday was all about, a highly motivated task force that fought fire with fire and did not worry too much about the finer shades of rights and wrongs. The parts of the book describing its putative author's progress through the ranks are vividly rendered; villains get their comeuppance right and left at the end of pickhandles, the

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Sweeney's matchless drivers wheel the guvnor around backstreet corners to his strategic 'meets'. Sound stuff.

Even Slipper's descriptions of pounding a beat in Chelsea and poking around mortuaries and stolen car workshops as a lay detective have an authentic, shadowy crime-buff charm.

Slipper was also present at the birth of the supergrass system and he describes with insight and relish the selection and shaping of these informers who have transformed — unquestionably for the better, in his view — British methods of prosecution.

BUT FOR all its incidental merit Jack Slipper would never have written this book (or at least never had it published) had it not been for Ronnie Biggs. The shadow is confronted right at the outset in an introduction in which Slipper laments that official strictures forced him to keep quiet about the Yard's planning of the immortal fiasco in Rio.

Ronnie, on the other hand, dwells lengthily — although not at all self-pityingly — on the double-double cross that the *Daily Express* pulled in setting him up for Slipper. Most of the oft-told story being familiar, it is Biggs's charming insouciance as a victim that gives his book its value.

However, as a chronicler, I must say that it is gratifying to find that both of these versions of the curious events that began in the office of the *Daily Express* in 1974 and ended with Slipper's galling, empty-handed return to Gatwick vary so little from the facts that had to be so painstakingly mined at the time — although comparing the books is rather like hearing the two parties to a divorce describing the same marriage.

Slipper dwells lengthily on the reasons that his superiors at the Yard embarked on such a weird escapade: no faith in the Foreign Office, Interpol or the Brazilian Government.

But he completely fails to explain why the police ever allowed themselves to become — and to remain — a party to the shabby deal with the *Daily Express* which was the true source of all his troubles.

Finally, he permits himself a piece of self-justification that he cannot be allowed to get away with. To say that he blew his chances of retrieving Biggs the moment that, in his innocence, he presented himself unannounced to the local police of Copacabana Beach rather than the *federales* who hold sway over all foreigners is nothing but a typical press distortion, Slipper now claims. There had never been more than a 50-50 probability of his mission succeeding, he says, and the Yard accepted that before he left Britain.

WELL NOW, DCI (retd.), police officers are not the only folk who keep careful notes against the day they may need to consult them to give evidence. What it says in one of *my* note-books, jotted down on the occasion, only a few months after your grievous disappointment, when we met in the Swan in Bayswater — a pub fondly described in this book as one of your favourite 'contact' rendezvous — is 'You know, I reckon we would have got him back all right if we'd only gone to the other lot first, the federal coppers.'

That was your considered verdict then, Jack. It is mine still today. □

THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

Man-tanning

Solar by CAROLINE MYLON *Oval House*
Mama's Gone A'Hunting by SIREN *York and Albany*
Female Trouble by BRYONY LAVERY *Theatrespace (Arts from 22 April)*
What's Got into You by ELAINE MORGAN *Tricycle*

You wouldn't ask Hitler or Himmler to write a balanced, fair-minded notice of a protest-play mounted by the inmates of a Nazi concentration camp; and perhaps the same principle disqualifies me from reviewing the angrier offerings of the London-wide event that calls itself the Women's Theatre Season. Unjustly enough, there's something in me that resents hearing myself and my fellow-beards defined as a load of self-pitying, exploitative slobs given to drunkenly playing darts and capriciously destroying the planet. For one thing, I don't play darts, and, for another, being called self-pitying makes me feel sorry for myself. Also, if the planet can survive Margaret Thatcher, it can probably survive me and my cronies. But the fact that we are, on the whole, quite a nice class of slob doesn't deter Caroline Mylon, who seems to think that Earth has a future only if it's rescued from man-power, or the three women called Siren, who actually recommend a massed female exodus to Andromeda, Vega or some healthier star. Even the astute and able Bryony Lavery, bad cess to her, briefly indulges in a fantasy in which men are made redundant and dispatched by rocket into outer space: 'It's just like a prick — you can see it get smaller and smaller.'

The imaginings are often galactic; but galactic is not necessarily good. *Solar* gets so absorbed with the sexually heated relationship between its two principal women that it neglects the rather more apocalyptic sci-fi saga in which one of them is supposedly involved; and, speaking for myself, I simply didn't understand how she outwits and converts the rogue computer with the male voice which is, it seems, inveigling the planet into the pit. Even those who can tolerate the laborious banter that passes for dialogue must admit that the thing as a whole is pretty ineptly narrated. And *Mama's Gone A'Hunting* is just a bit, well, tendentious. I mean, how seriously are we to take the episode in which Mozart's kid sister elegantly improvises the 40th symphony on the keyboards, only to be sent packing by beastly little Wolfgang, who proceeds incompetently to plagiarise her composition? There must be more convincing ways of demonstrating that women have their creative genius, too. One might be to ensure that *Mama* itself was a really imaginative, original effort instead of what I fear it is, a prolonged exercise in oracular recapitulation.

It takes the form of a court-room tussle between Man and Woman, mediated by an extra-terrestrial judge; and it does, it's true, throw up the odd telling line or piece of information. I didn't know that some 19th-century surgeons dealt with depression by chopping out wombs; I caught myself mumbling 'touché' when a man boasted of 'protecting' woman, only to realise that he actually meant protecting her against himself. But most of the points about masculine prejudices, oppression and general misconduct were familiar, uninterestingly made, and none the more persuasive for being put into the mouths of a female talking exquisite BBC English and a male spouting a sort of subtopian yobbo. In fact, the most authentically surprising thing in the evening was the woman's last-moment beef to the man, that the trial had 'as always, gone the way you wanted' and 'you really hate us, don't you?' After two hours spent watching her gleefully make hay with his straw, supported by one of the least impartial umpires in or out of human history, it seemed to me that her accusations would have been more aptly directed at herself.

A LITTLE exact and discriminate observation strikes me as not only more artistically satisfying, but also more effective as polemic, than a lot of galactic generalisation; and this brings me gratefully to Ms Lavery's revue, which is on quite another level of sly wit and wry sophistication. The audience most obviously enjoyed the sketch in which her flatmates wriggle and shriek with delight at Di's engagement, only to mutter behind her back about the folly of marrying someone more frog than prince; but there are others whose strength is their greater subtlety, and they are all put over with a dash and inventiveness by Anne-Marie Davies, Caroline Noh and Anne-Louise Wakefield, a three-woman cast that verges on (and sometimes into) the superb. The show's stance is feminist all right; and those who (like me) don't relish feeling like St Sebastian, or Goliath, or some masochistic blend of both, should be warned that it isn't without its satiric slings and arrows. But it always seems less interested in grimly deriding the male than in celebrating the female. At one point the cast simply stands and pulls funny faces; and even that has a festive, liberating feel.

What's Got Into You? is more orthodox both in style and content. Depending on how you look at it, it's refreshingly free from rhetoric, or ideologically somewhat unsound, since it's a careful, sympathetic portrait of a young wife (Nina Holloway) prepared to accommodate herself in most ways to a husband (Glynn Sweet) who begins every sentence with 'the trouble with women is' and blithely passes off his more outrageous selfishnesses as logic, reason and natural wisdom. Only when he smirkingly browbeats her into aborting her pregnancy, just because a baby will leave him less to spend on cigs, beer, car and rugger, does she mildly balk. Funnily enough, he was the only male character I saw last week both real and horrible enough to merit blasting off into outer space; but that, as it happens, isn't the conclusion of the company presenting the play. It's called Bag and Baggage and hies from Wales, where they're apparently still sufficiently backward to see happy endings in terms of marital rapprochement rather than in exiling half the populace to some Siberia in the sky.

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ART

John Spurling

Two-skull trick

Robert Mason *Ann Berthoud Gallery, Langley Court, Long Acre, London WC2*
Jack Smith *Fischer Fine Art*

Robert Mason's faithful models for the last three years have been a pair of human skulls. They even accompany him to Italy, where much of his painting is done. But, like the skull of the murdered lady in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, introduced to the lecherous duke in the dark with poisoned lips, they are not immediately recognisable. Before he begins to paint them, Mason partly disguises them from himself, muffling their outlines in drapes, a spray of leaves, a piece of dangling tape or string. He works then in layer on layer of thin paper, drawing lines in charcoal, adding paint and chalk, rubbing through what he's done to the layer below and building up again through further layers, until the board he started from has acquired a dense surface of accretion and deletion. The result, however, is still very smooth and fine, with the texture of a 17th-century Old Master rather than a 20th-century Expressionist.

Cézanne, of course, painted skulls, sometimes singly, sometimes in threes or fours, and surrounded them with other still-life elements — candlestick, a tablecloth, fruit, leaves, flowers — but, although they remind one distantly of his outdoor work on rocks, there's no ambiguity about them: white and full-frontal, with their empty holes for eyes and noses, they are uncompromising death's-heads. Mason's are in effect landscapes. The crania become boulders or even mountains — the scale too is ambiguous — and the empty sockets, if they are discernible at all, the dark entrances to caves. There is often a patch of blue at the top of the painting and the passages of deep red and yellow, interspersed with black shadows and seamed with lines and fissures suggest a combination of sculptural solidity and the movement of light, water or air in confined spaces. The grandest painting in the show, *From Casoli*, looks nearer to a storm in the Alps than to a *nature morte;* another, *Biskra Still Life VI,* suffused in orange-red, is still and transparent, as if it were simultaneously flooded and lit by flames.

Why, one might ask; given a perfectly good pair of skulls, go to all this trouble to transmogrify them? Clearly Mason's method of working is a kind of reversed archaeology — every painting lays down a miniature Troy — and he wants his own process to reflect the long-term physical process by which one thing becomes another; clearly the human skull makes as potent and economical a symbol of this process as it is possible to discover. But there is, I think, a more personal reason.

Mason originally studied sculpture and emerged as a painter in a period when both figuration and, more significantly, the illusion of depth were out of favour. The tension between his trained sense of the solid object and his new need to de-nature and flatten it was resolved in earlier paintings by choosing burial as a subject: nothing so proud and upstanding —whether the wicked duke himself or his whole city-state — that can't be flattened by dust and time:

> Advance thee, O thou terror to fat folks,
> To have their costly three-piled flesh worn off
> As bare as this.

Yet the opposite is equally true. Graves will open, bumps will appear in the plain, painting will again grapple with mass and depth. The most recent of Mason's skull-forms is self-evidently a skull, white against black, its face turned outwards, and the last painting in the show is not of a skull at all, but a fully-fleshed nude, back and head bent away into the depth of the picture. Nature, for this powerfully Jacobean artist, is no longer *morte* and it will be curious to see what dark transformations he puts her through next.

IN THE Fifties, when Robert Mason was still but a little tiny boy, Jack Smith (also a Yorkshireman) was making his name as one of the Kitchen Sink School and gaining the approval of an earlier *NS* art critic, John Berger. In the Sixties Smith turned abstract and evolved a style which has remained substantially unchanged ever since. The style has been variously compared to cuneiform writing, musical notation and, by Paul Overy in the catalogue to Smith's latest show, 'the sounds of words'; it consists of a repertoire of small visual signals, some grey, some in bright artificial colours — in the new paintings they include crossed curves and spillikins, circles, rings, broken lines and perspective boxes — grouped, isolated or drawn up in rows over empty space. Smith has recently moved from London to Hove and his new paintings have a Dufyesque, seaside lightness and freshness. Yet, though I risk sounding like Berger, something went out of Smith when he abandoned the heavy forms of social realism. His abstraction has no centre to it, no passion knits it together, it is a kind of germ-free gymnastic display. Perhaps he should advertise for a couple of spare skulls. □

Minoru Nakamura

Not summer yet

In corners of the brilliant green woods
Hydrangea spill their blossoms through
the leaves.

The indigo flows back into the sea
Which still feels cold upon my naked feet.

Then there are living things more
transient than
Hydrangea blooms, further from
language than
The creatures of the sea. They drift away
Each year in dusty sunlight their brief hours.

I walk the shore, hearing the thunder break,
Knowing the certain onset of this season.
The sea! The shapes of sunlight on your
rocks!

And shall I glimpse this once again?
The summer
Is waiting far out in the dazzling bay,
Raising its plumes of gold air in the morning.

translated by Dennis Keene

TELEVISION

Julian Barnes

The art of being interviewed

A WEEK OF playing a dead bat to interviewers. Field-Marshal Auchinleck, Verity Bargate, Howard Hodgkin — all loosened the wrists and played the soft, deadening prod. Only Ms Bargate occasionally opened out, walloping the ball back into the bowler's crutch. On *The South Bank Show* (LWT) Melvyn Bragg asked whether it gave her particular pleasure to put on plays written by women at her Soho Poly theatre. 'I don't see that that needs to be discussed,' she replied pityingly. Ouch.

The Auk's technique was more like that of Trevor Bailey, austerely trickling everything back down the pitch, and treating with hauteur the wily spin attempted by David Dimbleby. This BBC interview, filmed in Marrakech some ten years ago, when the Auk was in his late eighties, proved an unexpectedly touching obituary. Its subject was still marvellously spry, memory-filled, and serene about what might for others have been the unendurable bitternesses in his career. This serenity seemed much more than British self-control; it attained a zen-like quality as he spoke unresentfully of Churchill (who sacked him) and Montgomery (who pinched some of his glory). He seemed genuinely content to let history be his judge. All that Dimbleby's agreeable interview lacked was a glimpse of Auchinleck's faithful Moorish retainer, who served him devotedly in his declining years, and who used to appear, for the amusement of the Auk and his occasional guests, in a series of joke-shop noses.

MELVYN Bragg ran into another awkward customer on *TSBS* in Howard Hodgkin. Not that he was truculent; he couldn't have been more charming. It was just that Bragg seemed to be transmitting on one frequency and Hodgkin receiving on another. We learned that the painter's fauvely-coloured abstract portraits start off more or less figuratively; then he gradually overpaints them, getting ever more vigorous in his brushwork and abstract in his manner as he progresses. 'How do you extract the two people from this portrait?' 'There's no need to at all.' 'The green shank up the side — that's part of a person?' 'Yes.' Perhaps Bragg persisted too long in trying to make figurative sense of what Hodgkin painted; but one certainly didn't envy him his leatherette chair. When a painter ends up saying, 'I can't understand my pictures — I can't explain why they are like they are,' you do rather wonder what the point of interviewing him is. And at the same time, you do rather hope someone might cleverly wangle him on to a Parkinson show one of these days.

Perhaps what one should do with the tricky interviewee is simply point him towards the camera and let him get on with it. That's what they did with William Ger-

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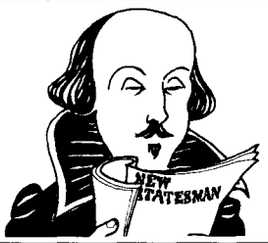

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M.GHANI

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hardie in 1972, and the engaging result was included in Michael Holroyd's *Arena* tribute to the novelist, *God's Fifth Columnist* (BBC-2). The programme began winningly with Gerhardie pouring a quart of Bristol Cream sherry into a glass of evaporated milk, producing his own private cocktail, which he called Sherryvappa. He claimed it had no alcoholic content whatsoever, and that you could safely drive a car on it. You could probably run one on it too, for that matter.

Gerhardie — frail and red-rimmed of eye, but still delightfully puckish — came across as a sort of grand, faded dandy, digressive and wry. He dropped a lot of names — but then they made quite a noise as they fell — and overflowed with anecdote and reminiscence. One memorable detail came when he reminded us that Chekhov's coffin was delivered to his family in a crate marked 'For Oysters'. A fitting parallel, then, that Gerhardie's famous tetralogy, *This Present Breath* (which we saw him working on), should have been stored in cardboard boxes marked 'West Side Lager'. Particularly as the work turned out to be froth on the daydream; though Gerhardie proclaimed it almost complete, the reality, as Holroyd showed us, was a mass of inconsequential notes. If his description of this abandoned masterpiece was regrettably brief, Holroyd generally made a capable and comforting prefacer. Perhaps he should be invited to chair the follow-up to *Read All About It*.

The surprise of the last *RAAI* series was Clare Francis. Just when one had her booked for the Erin Pizzey Memorial Jug, she turned out to be eloquent, intelligent and commensensical. She was clearly one on whom the camera smiled, and to whom it would return. What has happened in *The Commanding Sea* (BBC-2), though, is that she has been ruthlessly packaged. Marketable co-narrator Laurence Olivier seethes, swoops and whistles away like a one-man wind machine; J.H. Plumb advises; the whole thing is 'based on an idea by Warren Tute'; and the book is out this week. The first programme was a disaster. The solo yachtswoman chugged slowly down the Channel, occasionally imparting some OU info about spludgets and clodding-irons; while all around her whirled a mad macedoine of history, archaeology, salts' lore, myth, warfare and coracle-builders. And poor Clare is left having to utter brisk, hopeful links such as this: 'The Egyptians were a very inventive lot.' If they'd had to sit through the whole of *The Commanding Sea*, they'd have invented ITV 5,000 years before we did. □

Among this week's contributors:

KAI BIRD, associate editor of the *Nation* (New York), is currently working with the *New Statesman*.

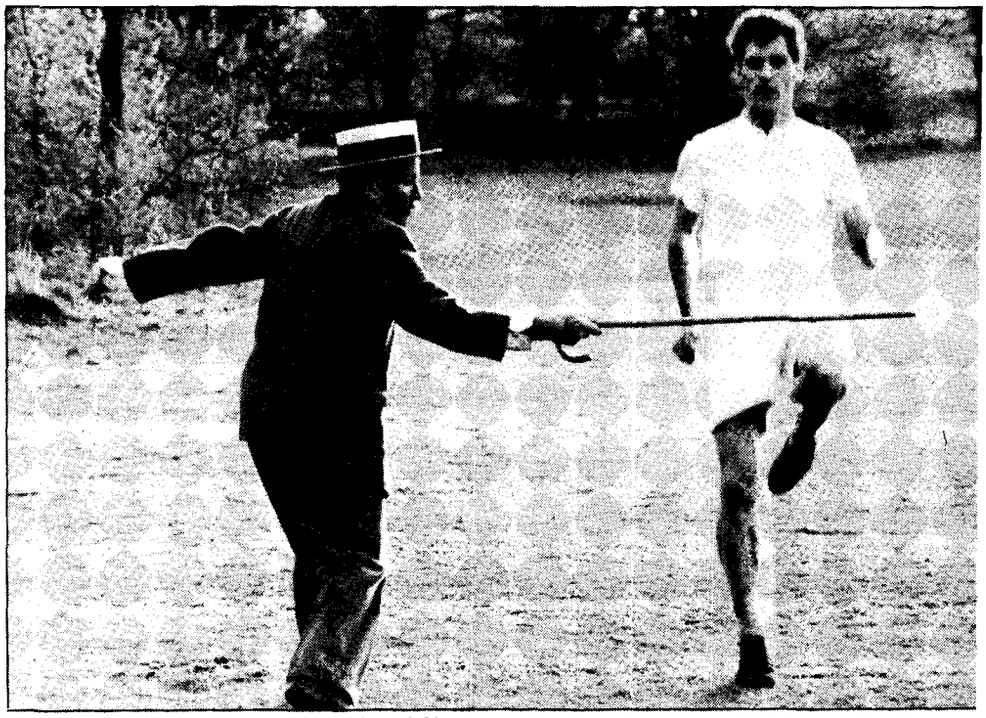
BILL BUFORD is the editor of *Granta*.

ANTHONY DELANO, author of *Slip Up*, is Managing Editor of the *Daily Mirror*.

STEVE SCHIFFERES, formerly Research Officer at Shelter, is working on a book about John Wheatley and the origins of council housing.

ALEX CALLINICOS's books include *Althusser's Marxism*.

TED HONDERICH teaches philosophy at University College, London.



Sam Mussabini (Ian Holm) coaching Harold Abrahams (Ben Cross)

FILMS

John Coleman

Dashing young fellows

Chariots of Fire (A) *Odeon, Haymarket*
La Cage aux Folles II (AA), *Cinecenta 3*
The Kidnapping of the President (X) *Odeon, Marble Arch*
John Cassavetes season *NFT 7-26 April*

We owe a fair debt to David Puttnam, producer of *That'll Be The Day, Stardust, Mahler, Bugsy Malone, The Duellists* and *Midnight Express*. Ridley Scott and Alan Parker may have chosen subsequently to go and work stateside, but Mr Puttnam somehow contrives to stay loyal to our limping old country and to give British directors their first chances. It may have been Arab and American money that got his latest production into orbit, but *Chariots of Fire*, this year's sublimely safe choice for the Royal Film Performance, is quintessentially our show, written by Colin Welland, directed by Hugh Hudson (hitherto known for his documentaries and commercials), and filmed all over Great Britain, with much of it shot — partly at the suggestion of Sir Harold Wilson — in the high unemployment region of the North West. The Bebington Sports Arena on the Wirral side of the Mersey, for instance, stood in for the Stade de Colombes where the Paris Olympics of 1924 were held.

And thereabouts hangs the tale, which is generous, inspirational and agreeably old-fashioned in its morality throughout. Trust Mr Welland, though, to have imported a little contemporary class edge and humour. The '24 Olympics will be mainly remembered by those who can as belonging to the astounding Finnish long-distance runner, Paavo Nurmi, who won three individual and two team gold medals. Johnny 'Tarzan' Weissmuller was almost as reckonable in the swimming events. But the concern here is with two remarkable British sprinters who also picked up golds, heavily against the odds, and with the vastly different compulsions or inspirations that motivated them to breast the tape first: Harold Abrahams, son of a Lithuanian Jewish financier, and Eric Liddell, born into a Scottish missionary family and destined to return to his natal country, China, in 1925, there to carry on his evangelical vocation. One of the more attractive aspects of Hugh Hudson's rather choppy film is its determined use of new faces in the principal roles, a notion triumphantly justified in the outcome. As the no-nonsense, prickly, sometimes saturnine Abrahams, determined to combat anti-semitism through his physical prowess, Ben Cross is magnificently found. Ian Charleson, with the harder task of conveying a rock-solid religious conviction uncloyingly, proves equally memorable.

'To win,' explains this Liddell to his anxious sister on a picturesque hillside, 'is to honour Him.' Up at Caius College in Cambridge in 1919 young Abraham's philosophy is simpler. He has just achieved the College Dash round the quad while the clock strikes twelve, watched from an upper window by the Master (Lindsay Anderson in a steely cameo) and the Provost of Trinity (Sir John Gielgud). 'Perhaps they really are God's chosen people, after all,' murmurs Gielgud, turning away. Abrahams talks fiercely to his friend and fellow-athlete, Aubrey Montague (Nick Farrell): 'I'm going to take them on, all of them, one by one, and run them off their feet.' Soon he has persuaded Sam Mussabini (Ian Holm wily under a moustache and straw hat) to coach him professionally, thus incurring the gentlemanly displeasure of Provost and Master. Words like 'tradesman' and 'plebeian' float through the academic air. Abrahams will have none of it. 'Yours are the archaic values of the prep school playground,' he responds. Gielgud waits till he has left.

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'Well, there goes your Semite, Hugh. A different God, a different mountain-top.' But if young Harold has a god, we hear nothing of him, any more than we see Harold *en famille*.

The only loved one he does acquire is pretty Sybil (Alice Krige), a singer and actress performing in one of his pet Gilbert and Sullivan light operas, and — after a sprightly brief scene or two together — she is left to be reassured by charming Andy Lindsey (Nigel Havers), elder son of a duke, who waves her off to the Savoy Theatre in a Rolls before settling to the serious business of taking a series of hurdles set up in his superb grounds. Each hurdle bears a full champagne glass and the aim is to spill not a drop.

There are lots of small, lovely scenes of that order in this period piece, which further deploys a good deal of overlapping music (Gilbert and Sullivan, inevitably, and 'Jerusalem', from which the title is a mite obscurely drawn, for the 1978 memorial service for Harold Abrahams which opens and effectively closes the film); one is consistently entertained and sometimes moved. Sam delightedly bashing his arm through his boater as he hears the National Anthem from the Stade and knows his protégé has won the 100 metres; the true-life matter of Liddell refusing even the Prince of Wales's persuasion to run an Olympic heat on a Sunday, with Patrick Magee growling evilly as Lord Cadogan ('In my day, it was King First, God after'); our upper-class runners watching a newsreel of the menacing Yanks arriving in a French cinema — these keep things rolling along for interest.

MY RESERVATIONS come down to questioning what the whole affair is *really* about. If it's a cry for a return to the relative innocence of the sporting Twenties, then it surely arrives too late. And there is the prime difficulty of making the actual athletics exciting. Any fool can milk a marathon, but sprints are matters of seconds and too much uneasy tactical resort to slow motion becomes obtrusive, even tedious. Yet there are all those faces fresh to film to enjoy; and all the cameo parts, not forgetting Nigel Davenport's arrogant Lord Birkenhead, are expertly allocated and played. I can't help feeling, however, that *Chariots of Fire* is, as it were, advertising something unspecified.

La Cage aux Folles II hideously embarrasses for homosexuality. *The Kidnapping of the President* is a Toronto-based bore, with a nasty beginning. Go to the *NFT*, rather, and catch the best of that hypertense actor-director Cassavetes.

Mistaken identity

Ken Worpole regrets a composite error in his review article (*NS* 20 March) in which the identities of Lumphinnans and the Vale of Leven were accidentally transposed as a result of a mistranscription from notes to final text. Particularly sincere apologies to *NS* readers in Scotland.

NEW STATESMAN INDEX

The index for July-December 1980 (Vol. 100) is now available, price £1.00 post free, from the publisher

10 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ

Weekend competition

No 2662 **Set by Snubbin**

The blazing integrity implicit in Shirley Williams's dischevelure may currently be accounted one of the Social Democrats' main electoral assets. But, come 1984, they're going to need more than that to ride to power. An extract (not more than 120 words please) from the PR agency's confidential recommendations on how best to tart up the SDs' individual and collective image. By 16 April.

No 2659 **Set by Toby Jugge**

Extracts from James Joyce as written by P. G. Wodehouse or vice versa.

Report **By Ms de Meaner**

Toby Jugge need not think that he'll be setting any more comps in the near future — not after calmly announcing that he hasn't read much Joyce lately and then beetling off on his hols. And as for John Sweetman who complained that you couldn't really *do* a Joyce in 120 words . . . Actually, it's quite clear that Wodehouse is much more difficult than Joyce. Congrats to the doughty few who tried him, and, since the sun, they tell me, came out today, nine green ones for each winner.

What of lord Jeevus, mansavant to the sighing scion, the defective spoken Rooster? Quicksalver he presents his Masterbertie with the tellergram. —Frome your Taunte Agagatha, he articleates. I took the precocion of sapprising myselve with the discontents.

Berties swoons back, sweetly and musically into the comfit depths of the soh-fah. — Agath! aghst crows wooster. Scanning the rose of letters, She wands me to lurk after her pique! AghastlyappincrappindoggyofunimpoochablancestryanddisgustinpersonalhabitsbythenameFidowoofwoof tergrr! Who, Jovus, was the been in litterychair who stood Daring on a peke in Solent?

— I bleeve it is Curtiss to womb you refur, from the walks of Kates.

— That's a cove I'd gladely emulate, Jeevus.

— Will that be All, sir?

— All, Learned Protector. Oh! Better buy a rub-a-bone.

GERARD BENSON

What ho I said you are doubtless referring to the eminent French artist of that ilk said Jeeves a Watteau would go nicely in the drawing-room with your Toulouse-Lautrec artists of the world unite you have nothing Toulouse but Lautrec he added misjeevously ah gayparee I said at the stern of the century with all those cocottes and grisettes la bell epox Lautrec put it all down on oo-la-la can-canvas ou est la plum de ma tante vive la tante cordiale are you going to Finnegan's Wake enquired Jeeves no my head is spinning it's the morning after precisely so said Jeeves it's the mourning after how long will it last I asked a wake is a long time . . .

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

An affable enough cove Stephen Dedalus, bound to me by tissues of art and imperishable memory, if that's the phrase I'm groping for. No doubt Jeeves would know, he still eats fish regularly, brainy beggar. Years ago the said Dedalus and I had done a stretch at Clongowes College, then under the sway of Baldyhead Dolan, master of the pandybat and all round bad egg. Such sore travails draw striplings together like hoops of, what is it, steel.

So when I bumped into young Dedalus unexpected outside Drones one fine summer morning the old ticker leaped.

'Pip pip old horse,' I cried. 'How are tricks these days?'

'I'm an artist now,' he replied modestly.

SYDNEY GYDNEY

What a deucedly sticky day who was that classical bloke oesophagus was it who rolled a hunk of rock uphill I feel more than a jot of sympathy for the blighter I could do with one of Jeeves bedfordshire specials dont know whats in them eye of newt I shouldn't wonder but they bring a beatific smile to the careworn Wooster features weve had our diffs the poached egg incident springs to mind thought I'd lost him the Wooster stomach chilled like a baked alaska heart I lured him back I understand from Mr Fink-Nottle sir he said in his injured tone that you wish me to resume my duties oh rather Jeeves no time for false pride Bertie I thought rather.

PETER NORMAN

'I say Bloom old corpse.'
'What?'
'I say Bloom.'
'Still here.'
'Er . . . Bloom'
'Stephen, don't be such an ass.'

Clearly Bloom felt this world needed fewer and better Stephens. 'Frankly Leo, the Dedalus chemise would have gone on the coffin staying on the hearse. I don't know if you are familiar with the poet Burns — but things seem dashed agley, what?'

I lowered a swift bracer over the tonsils. Jove, pitting his wits against the Sligo shrimp, was not on hand and what the young master needed was a goodish spot of surging round. With Bloom we had drawn something of a blank.

D. L. HARMER

Flittering, slittering bats in the head I had like a Hangoverian king. Too much of my goodness last night, and every nighte and alle, so wake lyke this, Christe receive my soule. Jeeves, inshimmering, looks asquint at my swimming sconce and it turned to the wall like a crowned prince and me groaning for an unpicklemeup. One of me potations, sorr? says he — And a potentous one, says I. Jeevus Christ, says I, wallowing it whole. Twas like sunrise over the hills of Mourne as it coursed quacksalvery to me fate with a golden glow like the head was on the offender of the pist night. Guinness me, I says, *that* drones me swallows.

PETER ALEXANDER

Was Bingo Little, husband of Rosie M. Banks, in need of a loan?

Having lost £10 on a horse, Gargoyle, and subsequently the £10 intended by his wife for the bank account of his infant, Algernon Aubrey, on betting his bookmaker, Charles Pikelet, that Algernon was uglier than Pikelet junior, Bingo needed £20 to circumvent connubial strife.

Did he get it?

Offy Prosser, tightfisted millionaire fellowmember of the Drone's club, godfather to Algernon, gave Bingo £50.

Why?

Because Bingo had gate-crashed his *tête-à-tête* at the Savoy Grill the preceding day when unsuccessfully trying to obtain a loan of £10 from him, thereby preventing his proposing marriage and becoming the father of an infant hideous as Algernon.

MAY DAY

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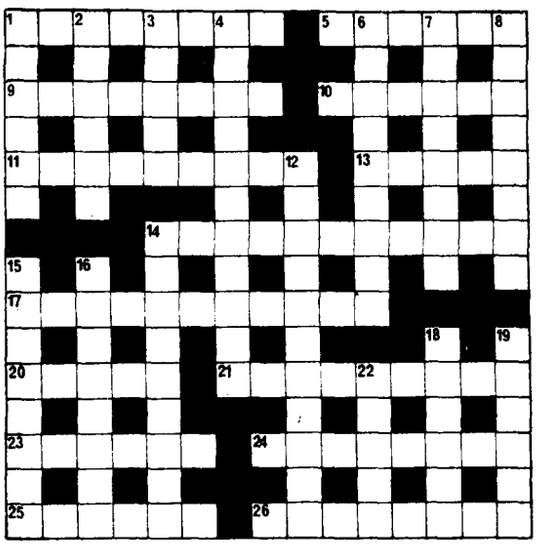


ACROSS

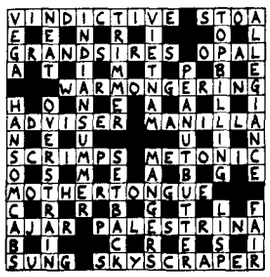
1 Agreement in the crew — that makes sense! (8)
5 'I shall be but a — of an author' (Gray) (6)
9 Noisy thieves? (8)
10 Kingdom for a university (6)
11 Now boost a thousand turning prosperous places (4,5)
13 Times in which one sees wrong item picked out (5)
14 Acting of necessity includes human beings (11)
17 Flashy quality of airmen who drink? (11)
20 Wives freely give their opinions (5)
21 Obvious argument for one who appears in court (9)
23 They are sharp and at the beginning Kevin is injured (6)
24 Split which sets one of a quartet against antiquity (8)
25 Abstract of gravity in changing tides (6)
26 Lock outside relatives for misdemeanour (8)

DOWN

1 To dress, carried up to start with (6)
2 Our station makes us enter a public school (6)
3 A small piece of territory is occupied (5)
4 Admiration which makes man propel vessel containing gold (11)
6 Poor period for the novel (4,5)
7 In my gin nothing is mixed — it is a disgrace! (8)
8 The PM would be more friendly if a point were lost (8)
12 He plays safe, deploying the rest around a single form of defence (11)
14 One established in the papers as a holy woman (9)
15 Was stimulating and demonstrated the truth without approval (8)
16 The Queen is in the distance making a presentation (8)
18 The insect is a low fellow in intelligence (6)
19 Part of meal consumed by faster (6)
22 Gets close, putting one organ inside another (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1377



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Meetings

ADLERIAN SOCIETY: Herta Orgler Memorial Lecture: 'What of the Future?' by Dr Neil Beattie MD, BHy, DPH, President of the Adlerian Society of Great Britain, followed by discussion 8 p.m. Tuesday 7 April. Refreshments from 7.30. Community Rooms, 36 Millman St, London WC1. Visitors welcome, 50p. Students 25p.

APRIL AT 'SOUTH PLACE' Sunday Meetings at 11 a.m. 5th: Peter Cadogan, 'Nietzsche, Arch-Prophet of Modern Humanism'. 12th: Sir Alfred Ayer, 'Three Types of Morality – G. E. Moore, H. A. Pritchard, C. I. Lewis'. 26th: Ronald Higgins, 'Beyond the Seventh Enemy – The Politics of Persons'. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Admission free – all welcome.

PUBLIC LECTURE: Restoring Natural Resources through Permaculture – the practical use of land and waste resources for energy, food, etc. Dr William Mollison. 6 April 8 p.m. £1 at door. Inter-Action Centre, 15 Wilkin St, London NW5. Tel. 01-267 9421.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE Sunday lectures on religion and philosophy. Enquiries 06285 26464.

THE IRISH IN BRITAIN: History Workshop 10 a.m. Sat. 25 & Sun. 26 April. Poly of N. London, Holloway Road. Tkts: £3 waged, £1 unwaged, from: 207 Sumatra Rd, NW6.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public Talk Sun. 5 April, 8 p.m. 'The Art of Meditation'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

Prospects for the Environmental and Consumer Movements

Seminar on **Tues. 14 April,** at the ***Royal Institution,*** *21 Albemarle* Street, London W1. 9.40 a.m.-5 p.m.

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